Champagne moment . . . Villeneuve celebrates his world title in the time-honoured fashion PHOTO: JOSE MANUEL RIBEIRO

Motor Racing European Grand Prix

Villeneuve has the final wor[d]

Paul Hayward in Jerez

A SPINNING Ferrari wheel in a gravel trap was the enduring symbol of Michael Schumacher's fallibility. The 1997 Formula One championship was handed to Jacques Villeneuve when the German driver tried to barge his rival's Williams-Renault off the track on the 48th lap but succeeded only in ruining his own chance and diminishing his formidable reputation.

So Schumacher is human after all. Formula One's most acclaimed pilot came into last Sunday's European Grand Prix needing only to finish in front of Villeneuve to secure his third championship but lost it with a spectacular misjudgment two-thirds of the way through this dramatic 69-lap car chase.

The race was won by Mika Hakkinen from his McLaren team-mate David Coulthard, but Villeneuve's third place was good enough for him to complete the IndyCar-Formula One double in only his second season with the Williams team. He is only the fourth driver to do it after Mario Andretti, Emerson Fittipaldi and Nigel Mansell.

Villeneuve was greeted by mechanics wearing fluorescent yellow wigs modelled on his own peroxide crop. His was a drive of immense courage and concentration that will remove many of the doubts about his sometimes volatile temperament. It was the Canadian's misfortune that so much attention was focused on Schumacher's rough-house tactics.

"It shows what his antics are," said last year's champion Damon Hill. Villeneuve said drily: "Either he had his eyes shut or his hands must have slipped on the steering wheel. When I took him on the curve I knew I had only a 50 per cent chance because there was a chance Michael would try to take me out."

The stewards, astonishingly, called it "a racing incident" and took no action. Schumacher said: "Jacques braked so late that he would have gone off if I hadn't turned into him. Neither of us would have made the corner braking so late."

In Switzerland, Ferrari fan clubs had been preparing to rev up and drive to the company headquarters in Maranello within 60 seconds of their idol taking the chequered flag. They were to join nearly 40,000 supporters and 20 television crews who had gathered in the small Italian town to proclaim a first Ferrari drivers' championship since Jody Scheckter's in 1979. The mayor had applied to have the town's name amended to "Maranello Made in Red" but the *Tifosi* will have had to paint it black instead.

The conventional wisdom on the season was that Schumacher was the faster driver in the cockpit of the slower car. His skill and iron will were supposedly overcoming the technical superiority of the Williams FW19. How ironic, then, that Schumacher, the embodiment of Ferrari's lavishly funded ambition, should wreck the team's chances of ending an 18-year wait with a failed attempt to end the struggle by force.

Schumacher's error, given his apparent decision to remove Villeneuve at the Dry Sack corner, was in not being Machiavellian enough. He was in a comfortable lead braking into the bend but was probably surprised to see Villeneuve's nose-tip poking through on his inside. The camera evidence shows a clear rightward jerk by Schumacher to the extent that his left arm was twisted over his right. The two cars collided but Villeneuve's chugged on. The most revered and fawned-over car-driver combination came to rest in the gravel with the rear wheel spinning impotently amid a puff of dust.

"Ferrari is not a team, it's an emotion," the firm's president Luca Di Montezemolo is fond of saying. Last Sunday that emotion was despair. Schumacher was the final gilt-edged extravagance who would take [the] prancing stallion back to the fr[ont]. For much of the season it seemed [to] be working. But another cold [en]counter with reality will have [taken] place in Maranello's Piazza [della] Liberta as the lashings of free La[m]brusco were diverted into [a] drowning of sorrows.

The TV audience in Italy was [ex]pected to edge towards the re[cord] 24 million who watched Italy lo[se to] Brazil on penalties in the 19[94] World Cup final. The roads [in] Maranello had been closed by 10[...] and the windows of the to[wn's] 16,000 residents decked out in [red] and yellow flowers. There is [no] record of Williams's home town - Wantage in Oxfordshire — erupti[ng] with similar fervour.

It is the second time in four years that Schumacher has been involved in a decisive collision in the season's final journey. Three years ago [in] Adelaide, Hill needed at least [two] points to overtake the German [but] was taken out when his adversary's Benetton bounced off a wall and knocked his Williams off the track. "It was Adelaide revisited," said Frank Williams last Sunday as his team tried to suppress their pleasure at seeing Schumacher in such discomfort.

THE only group happier than the Williams team, who clinched a record ninth constructors' championship, were the impresarios and money men of Formula One. Strictly speaking they would have preferred a Ferrari victory to take to the banks as the flotation issue rumbles on, but drama of this magnitude is an equally saleable commodity. As Villeneuve said, "It was a very physical race", with plenty of tactical nuances.

Schumacher paralysed Villeneuve with a roaring start but was attacked right up to the denouement by the Williams partnership of Villeneuve and Heinz-Harald Frentzen. Schumacher received no such support from Eddie Irvine but was helped when Norberto Fontana's Sauber, powered by a Ferrari engine, pluckily held up Villeneuve for a couple of seconds.

The outcome left both Villeneuve and Schumacher on new ground: Villeneuve as Formula One champion and Schumacher in the doghouse. The plan had been for him to return to Maranello Made in Red as Ferrari's saviour. Instead he came back to the pits on another staple of the Italian motor industry: a moped.

Schumacher brought to book

MOTOR racing's supreme disciplinary body ordered Michael Schumacher to account for his driving at Jerez as Formula One sources suggested he knew his car would not last the race, *writes Alan Henry.*

Moments before the accident, the Ferrari pit is said to have told Schumacher that one water radiator was leaking and his engine was overheating.

On the two previous laps the Ferrari had lost 2.3sec and Villeneuve's Williams was suddenly on his tail. When the German went into his final bend he knew that, if the Williams [got] past, it would be the end of his influence on the race and pro[ba]bly of his title hopes.

The condition of the Ferrari engine would have shown on the team's computer screen and could be available as evidence when Schumacher appears before an extraordinary meeting of the FIA World Motor Sport Council in Paris on November [...].

At the very least Schumacher could face a multi-million dollar fine and a suspended ban; at worst he may be barred from the first two races next year.

Cryptic crossword by Araucaria

Across

1 Meditation, in spite of having little time (7)
5 Tremendous loss (7)
9 Senior actor provides home-made wine (5,4)
10 Home help goes back to the country (5)
11 No use for 14's 1 acrosses (4)
12 Diver to give her a cuddle — pointless going back to the king (6-4)
14 Saint's part in Jerusalem, the holy city (6)
15 He gives formal acknowledgment to make us alert (7)
16 Barker? Hardly: holding a little money I thrust back (7)
18 The fool is likely to be in the soup (6)
20 One who plots to put the mother country to right (10)
21 Where flowers are 11 or ill? (4)
24 Extremes on river: part of 12's part of 2 (5)
25 Shunning of drunken sot for ethnophobia (9)
26 Make a mess of a few words in the Old Testament (7)
27 In river and islands there's little time for Northerners (7)

Down

1 I put a greenback in the fountain (5)
2 Former representative of university would spend nothing at first (3,4)
3 Pierce and draw blood? (4)
4 14's Englishmen at home to Australian in menace (5,3,2,1,4)
5, 6, 23 14's work "Stiff Lodger", harsh 'n' pathetic book (3,7,2,3,5,5,4)
7 Agree to love — but change of course (2,5)
8 Very good biscuit (7)
13 Resilience of a master taking in a French film (10)
16 Fish (part of 12 from part of 10) recalling where 14's 4 went later (7)
17 Shut off what sounds unhealthy and unchaste (7)
19 Latin books, I hesitate to say, will tranquillise (7)
22 Novelist of parliaments (5)
23 See 5 down

Last week's solution

A	N	O	R	E	X	Y		O	F	W	R	A	T	H
N		F		A		A		M		O		P		E
D	U	M	A	S		T	H	E	G	R	A	P	E	S
M		I		T		E		L		M		A		I
E	N	C	L	O	I	S	T	E	R		F	L	A	T
N		E		F				T		C		L		A
				E	S	T	A	T	E	A	G	E	N	T
A		T		D		H		E		N		D		E
S	T	O	R	E	P	E	R	S	O	N				
P		R		N		O				E		J		E
E	A	T	S		C	R	O	S	S	R	O	A	D	S
R		I		B		I		T		Y		C		S
G	O	L	D	E	N	E	Y	E		R	O	Q	U	E
E		L		C		N		I		O		U		N
S	T	A	C	K	E	T		N	O	W	H	E	R	E

Published by Guardian Publications Ltd., 164 Deansgate, Manchester, M60 2RR, and printed by WCP Commercial Printing, Leek. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and mailing offices. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.

The Guardian Weekly

The Washington Post

Vol 157, No 19
Week ending November 9, 1997

Spy charged who tried to tell all in book

THE first British secret service agent to be charged with secrets offences since the Soviet spy George Blake, 36 years ago, appeared in court this week, *writes Richard Norton-Taylor.*

Richard Tomlinson, aged 34, was charged with planning to publish a book about his experiences in British intelligence.

In a case with remarkable echoes of the Spycatcher episode, which seriously embarrassed the Thatcher government, he is accused of planning to publish his book in Australia — where the Government would have difficulty in suppressing it.

Mr Tomlinson is also the first person to be charged under the 1989 Official Secrets Act.

At Bow Street magistrates court in London on Monday, he was remanded in custody for a week pending further Special Branch inquiries and the consent of the Attorney General, John Morris, which is needed if a prosecution is to go ahead.

Mr Tomlinson, who has dual British and New Zealand nationality, was allegedly planning to leave the country. If he were to have done so, there would have been little MI6 could have done to stop the book, as the failure to prevent the publication in Australia in 1986 of Spycatcher, memoirs of the former MI5 officer Peter Wright, demonstrated.

Mr Tomlinson has served in Bosnia and Moscow and was involved in investigating attempts by a Middle East power to acquire components destined for a suspected chemical weapons plant.

He was sacked in 1995 at the end of his three-year probation period. Malcolm Rifkind, then Foreign Secretary, signed a gagging order preventing him from taking his case to an industrial tribunal.

Mr Tomlinson told MI6 last year that his book was stored in coded files on two remote computers. "I have programmed both computers to decode and release the book on the Internet unless they receive a signal from me once per week," he said.

Reporting restrictions were lifted when he appeared in court this week. The Cambridge graduate with a first-class degree in aeronautical engineering remained silent throughout the 30-minute hearing.

He was refused bail on the grounds that he might abscond.

Mr Tomlinson's solicitor, John Wadham — director of the civil rights group Liberty — said after the hearing that his client had a grievance against MI6 which he had never been able to put forward. "I call on the Attorney General to throw this prosecution out," he said.

Iraq defies UN with bans and threats

Martin Kettle in Washington, Ian Black and Michael White

Iraqis take to the streets of Baghdad in support of President Saddam's anti-US stance PHOTO KARIM SAHIB

THE confrontation between Iraq and the United Nations escalated on Monday after Saddam Hussein threatened to shoot down United States spy planes but offered a "dialogue" over his action against UN weapons inspectors.

"This is a direct military threat to the United Nations," said Bill Richardson, the US ambassador at the UN. "This is an irresponsible escalation which we view with grave concern."

The chief UN inspector, Richard Butler, said on Monday that the next surveillance flight, scheduled for Thursday, would go ahead despite the Iraqi warning.

The UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan, responded to the latest developments by sending a three-man mission to Baghdad to try to persuade the Iraqi leader to back down.

Britain said it would support the use of force against Iraq but made clear in the face of objections from Russia and France that all diplomatic avenues — including the threat of new sanctions — would be explored first.

The White House rejected the call for dialogue, however, after Baghdad carried out its threat and blocked American members of a UN arms inspection team from entering a weapons site. "We're not interested in a dialogue," said spokesman Mike McCurry. "We're interested in compliance."

Baghdad newspapers reiterated that the 10 American weapons inspectors must leave the country by Wednesday night.

But Mr Butler said later that inspections by UN teams would proceed on Tuesday — with the Americans taking part.

"We will go back to work in the normal way in Iraq tomorrow," he said. "We will keep on doing it and we will do it knowing the [UN Security] Council completely supports that approach."

He was speaking after the Security Council endorsed Mr Annan's decision to send the envoys.

The Iraqi news agency INA said President Saddam had told his cabinet of "the need for dialogue to put things in order and on the right track". Iraq wanted "a clear and complete picture" of when the UN would lift sanctions imposed after the invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Mr McCurry said that the job of Mr Annan's three-man team, due in Baghdad on Wednesday, was not to negotiate a compromise. "The dialogue should consist of spelling out the ways in which he will comply with the will of the international community," he said.

British and American diplomats said they hoped the Iraqi leader could be given a ladder to climb down, but there was no indication of early agreement on new punitive measures if he did not.

Asked if the US was ruling out unilateral military action to enforce compliance by Iraq, Mr McCurry said: "I'm not ruling anything in or out."

In Abu Dhabi, Iraq's ambassador to the Arab League said Baghdad was prepared for all possibilities. "When we took this decision we were expecting, as in the past, that America would take hostile positions, including the use of military means against Iraq," Nabil Nijem said.

France is leading efforts to ensure that any retaliatory action against Iraq is taken through the UN and not by the US unilaterally.

In London, Downing Street signalled its support for Washington after officials in Tony Blair's office held direct talks with their counterparts in the presidential National Security Council in Washington.

Comment, page 12

Austria	AS30	Malta	60c
Belgium	BF80	Netherlands	G 5
Denmark	DK16	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 13	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.50
Germany	DM 4	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 450	Sweden	SK 19
Italy	L 3,500	Switzerland	SF 3.80

Building bridges to the future – with soya

Tim Radford

SCIENTISTS in the United States say they have found a way to make tanks, tractors, cars and even bridges out of soya beans.

A University of Delaware team called Acres (Affordable Composites from Renewable Sources) has filed a patent for a process that could end with cheaper, lighter and greener materials. They will replace the existing composites — plates, planks or beams of lightweight but costly petroleum resins, reinforced with glass fibres — to make material as stiff as steel but lighter.

The first industrial partner is the US tractor firm Deere and Co, which predicts a $50 million market for farm equipment made out of soya.

Soya is one of the world's great crops: the US alone grows more than 60 million tons a year. Soy products get into mayonnaise and medicines, anti-corrosion varnishes, fungicides and shampoos. Soy is used as a milk substitute, as cat food and as a cosmetic.

Soya protein is being tested in Illinois as an oestrogen substitute and North Carolina scientists think it could contain a cancer prophylactic. Soya oil costs half as much as the polyester, epoxy and vinyl ester resins used in modern composite materials to make everything from ship hulls to aircraft parts.

But this is the first time beans have been promoted as potential box girders for bridges or shown off as panels for hay balers. Just as builders stiffen concrete with steel rods, materials scientists toughened the soya oils by adding chemicals and then stiffened them further with fibres of glass.

A sample of the new soy composite went on show in Illinois last week; a 2.5 metre by 1m glass-reinforced, soy-based prototype baler part weighs 11kg — a quarter of the weight of its metal equivalent. Richard Wool, a chemical engineer, who directs the Acres group, says that one day hay or straw might be used to reinforce the resin.

Soya fabric-makers could face competition from the farm next door: another US group has discovered new stuff for water-resistant, biodegradable containers. It is made from corn.

Fiddling with profits as the planet burns

PRESIDENT Clinton's difficulty on global warming (Clinton embraces a paler shade of green, November 2) is that international policies are at the mercy of domestic special interests. He faces a hostile Congress and powerful industrial lobbies which are against any new environmental regulations or taxes.

Particularly fierce opposition has come from the Global Climate Coalition, a group of big oil companies, car-makers and electric utilities. The problem has been compounded by an acrimonious split between his economic advisers, who fear that reducing greenhouse gas emissions will damage United States industry, and his environmental advisers, who have been pushing for tough action, which they claim could stimulate economic innovation and efficiency.

The president, although a believer in the reality of global warming, has been characteristically reluctant to take measures that might offend any domestic groups. Americans are still unwilling to reduce their consumption for the sake of a problem that many perceive as remote and irrelevant to their daily lives.

The reality is that, as demonstrated by its refusal to sign the land mine treaty, the US has no qualms about ignoring international consensus for the sake of its perceived national interest.

(Dr) Paul de Sa,
Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA

THE report on the response to global warming misses one important point: many studies have shown that a moderate reduction in carbon dioxide emissions, between 1 and 2 per cent per year, could be achieved with a positive economic benefit.

Household heating and lighting bills, for instance, could be reduced without much effort. Huge savings can be made by using sensible public transport systems to reduce congestion. Where cars are necessary, Greenpeace has shown that it is possible to reduce fuel consumption by 50 per cent without compromising performance, safety, capacity or comfort. The development costs were minuscule compared with the money that major car manufacturers devote to refining the public image of their fuel-guzzling products.

Given the positive economic impact, there is no reason why European policies should be made contingent on the dubious workings of Washington's lobbies. The longer action is delayed the greater the risk that gradual changes, which are economically neutral or beneficial, will be insufficient to prevent disastrous changes in the climate.

Delay comes only from the lack of political will to shift a hugely conservative industrial establishment away from a system that is serving them well. The oil industry has built a vast empire and the emperor is desperately trying to hide his naked incompetence in the face of climate change.

(Dr) Martin Juckes,
Munich, Germany

SINCE the start of the West's awareness of ecological imbalances such as global warming, there has been a close attention on how we are destroying the planet (The planet is facing its hottest problem yet, October 26).

Maybe Man's detachment from the way we treat our planet is one of the reasons why politicians will probably pick up the fiddle in Kyoto later this year, rather than tackle the issue at hand.

It would be more effective to focus on the immediate interests of politicians, corporations and those who have the power to change things rather than on problems that do not affect them during their terms of office, or in the next fiscal year. Research on how global warming could hinder their profits in the long term would probably be more productive than trying to over-promote the way the planet is being damaged.

The planet will probably outlive the human race whatever we do to it. However, if we continue to ignore the prevalent signs of ecological disaster, then we have only ourselves to blame for our own mass suicide.

Kam-Wing Pang,
University of Ningxia, Yinchuan, China

Man-made with the hand of God

IT WAS interesting to read of the current exhibition of the Treasures of Mount Athos at Salonica (Republic of men, October 26). However, it is distracting to have this presented in the trappings of strident feminism.

Great works of art are produced under conditions of congruous levels of inspiration. It is impossible to discuss the matter in neutral terms, because this Orthodox religious art is not executed for exhibition as an object of secular inquiry. It is blessed to be a channel of communication between the worshipper and the heavenly presence portrayed.

These works were produced or located in the world's largest male monastic colony. There are female monasteries at which the presence of men is limited. These limitations are in place for the better flourishing of the spiritual life. After all, it is from a healthy religious life that such masterpieces derive.

If women "want more", then they must search out the conditions in which that longing may be satisfied. It will not prove fruitful to waste energy spoiling someone else's pitch; better rather to see how to find or establish one.

Virginia Hutchinson
Abbotsford, Victoria, Australia

IS NOTHING sacred? Helena Smith's one-sided feminist diatribe against "men-only monasteries" on Mount Athos ignores the fact that men are not agitating for access to "female-only convents". Single-sex spiritual retreats have worked well for over a thousand years. Helena Smith, get thee to a nunnery!

(Dr) J Douglas Porteous,
Victoria, BC, Canada

Intellectual rigor mortis

DR GOODCHILD pits the commercial barbarism of Western societies today against our culture of critical thinking, represented by postmodern writers such as Derrida (October 19). I would say that they are both manifestations of the same chaos, one economic and one of thought.

As the greed of the rich and the privileged causes workers to be shed from paid employment each year like the leaves in autumn, the sort of person (Dr Goodchild excepted) who teaches at a university is increasingly likely to be there because of her/his hard and competitive spirit, not for any real love of learning. Ditto students. Not to put too fine a point on it, universities are becoming staffed by quick-witted morons with good memories but little understanding of love of the traditional humanities.

Their courses, as a result, have no substance but they conceal this by the use of a jargon of such complexity that no one can follow them and they can say to those puzzled students (or colleagues) who complain, that they lack "intellectual rigor" (mortis?). The French philosophers in question function by providing the verbal ammunition in this, arms salesmen in the conceptual as some of their countrymen are, alas, in the military.

(Dr) Peter Gilet,
Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga, Indonesia

THERE are literally hundreds of books critical of current trends in French thought. The furore — if there is one — is presumably because the publication of a recent book critical of contemporary French philosophy is written by two scientists (Is modern French philosophy just a load of pseudo-scientific claptrap?, October 12).

The popularity of this book in the English press is disturbingly similar to the hostility to German thought that emerged in England during and after the first world war. At that time the influence of Hegel on English thought was pre-eminent. He was one of the most systematic and rigorous thinkers in the history of philosophy. But because of the war, Hegel was denounced in England, in much the same way as the current criticisms of contemporary French thinkers.

(Dr) Simon Lumsden,
University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

French women's sense of balance

IN THE Guardian Weekly of October 26 there are two articles — "Nanny minder case puts mother on trial" and "A bra too far" — and I do believe one accounts for the other very well.

In "A bra too far", Alex Duval Smith accuses French women of being too accommodating of their men. Moreover they laugh at feminist political correctness and, worse, don't feel victimised. But then, in France, "it is much easier to have a good job and run a family than it is in other countries". This is true not only because there are crèches and kindergartens where all children go from the age of three, but also because nobody sees anything wrong with that.

What happened to Deborah Eappen (hate mail, etc) just couldn't happen in France, where there is total agreement that mothers do not harm their children when they work outside the home.

These two very different outlooks between French and American societies may partly explain French women's "cosy complicity" with their men and why women here usually laugh off sexist ads and don't feel victimised.

Laure Tallot,
Montreuil, France

Briefly

YOU report on the same page the French Roman Catholic bishops' apology to Jews and the surrender of 10 Bosnian Croats to the international war crimes tribunal (October 12).

The juxtaposition provokes the question: isn't the value of such apology terribly undermined by the Church's silence about the recent crimes of Roman Catholic Bosnian Croats? Its complicity is hardly concealed. The thousands of pilgrims who visit Medugorje find three large flags hoisted directly in front of the town's recently built church. On one side of the Vatican flag is that of the self-declared illegal "ethnically cleansed" statelet of Herzeg-Bosna, and on the other that of Croatia. Medugorje is in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Nicholas Townsend,
Tiverton, Devon

ONE assumes that the United States administration considered the economic and social consequences of making their application on bananas to the World Trade Organisation before filing it (Rotten bananas, October 5). Whether they did or not, I hope we will be spared future complaints from Washington of instability and a growing drug-trade in its own "back yard".

William Ward,
Erdenet, Mongolia

IT SEEMS that a large number of Gypsies from the Czech Republic and Slovakia are currently seeking political asylum in Britain (November 2). If this is the case, surely we should not be considering for one moment the admission of either of these countries to the European Union or Nato. If these refugees are victims of discrimination or persecution, it is surely not acceptable by the standards of either organisation.

(Dr) Ronald M Gabriel,
Bédarrides, France

I ENJOYED very much the feature "Still in thrall to paper power" (October 26). I have been as astonished as anyone else with the piles of paper everywhere.

But may I take issue with the last paragraph about intensively managed plantations in Scandinavia? I am afraid David Harrison has not visited this part of the world. I am a greenish person myself, but I disagree strongly with these activists who paint this kind of picture.

There have been numerous quarrels about virgin forests, but these big, forest-covered countries have for a long period conducted their forest policies in a responsible way. Finland grows more than it cuts, in real forests, not plantations, and natural parks are huge by any standards.

Olli Kivinen,
Helsinki, Finland

The **Guardian Weekly**

November 9, 1997 Vol 157 No 19

Annual subscription rates are £49 United Kingdom; £55 Europe inc. Eire, USA and Canada; £63 Rest of World.
Letters to the Editor and other editorial correspondence to: The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ.
Fax: 44-171-242-0985 (UK: 0171-242 0985)
e-mail: weekly@guardian.co.uk

Russia and Japan kiss and make up

James Meek in Krasnoyarsk

THE end of the second world war is nigh, the leaders of Russia and Japan announced last weekend, closing their informal Siberian summit with a declaration of intent to sign a peace treaty by 2000.

It remained unclear how the Japanese prime minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, and President Boris Yeltsin would resolve the issue that has stopped the two countries formally ending hostilities for more than half a century — the status of the South Kurile islands, seized by Soviet troops during the last days of the war.

The meeting at Krasnoyarsk, halfway between Tokyo and Moscow, was Mr Hashimoto's idea and was supposed to make him and Mr Yeltsin bond. It finished with a diplomatic breakthrough, and with Mr Hashimoto submitting to a ritual that goes against everything a Japanese man of his generation learned about proper behaviour — he exchanged kisses with Mr Yeltsin.

"The president and I have agreed to make maximum efforts to conclude a peace treaty by the year 2000," Mr Hashimoto said. Mr Yeltsin added: "We've reached the stage of concrete deadlines."

The Hashimoto government has for some time shown frustration that two of the world's largest democracies — only 6km apart at their closest — are technically at war with each other.

With no sign of Mr Yeltsin giving way on Japan's demand to hand over the four South Kurile islands, Tokyo appears ready to try trade and friendship, believing that investment in the ravaged economy of the Russian Pacific region will bring it closer to Japan more quickly than hostility.

Despite the eagerness of both leaders to hug and praise each other from the start, conditions at Krasnoyarsk seemed unconducive to a jolly, relaxed male weekend.

The city was looking its brownest and filthiest, sheathed in drizzle and sleet and pollution from the smelter smoke stacks at its rim, its cracked grey tower blocks and poor, depressed inhabitants likely to confirm the deepest Japanese prejudices about Russian chaos. Last Saturday, several thousand protesters in the city centre denounced Mr Yeltsin and accused him of planning to return the Kuriles to Japan.

Yet the two leaders seemed determined to get the chemistry working. Mr Hashimoto presented Mr Yeltsin with a camera. Russia's main present in return was a pair of wolf skins.

The gifts were appropriate for a trading relationship between the two north Asian neighbours, which sees Japanese consumer goods being eagerly bought by Russians — second-hand cars from Japan are common in Krasnoyarsk — and raw material going the other way.

On the fringe of the summit, Mr Yeltsin's presence in Krasnoyarsk was haunted by the succession issue — 2000 is the date of the next presidential election.

There was a bizarre scene at a signing ceremony for an agreement dividing powers between Krasnoyarsk region and the federal government in Moscow when, at the last minute, the Russian president insisted on altering the document so that his heir-apparent, the deputy prime minister Boris Nemtsov, could sign it too.

Mr Yeltsin, aged 66, looked tired and had difficulty remembering the names of Krasnoyark's two sub-regions. The president's daughter and image-maker, Tatyana Dyachenko, was among those watching the signing ceremony. Asked about her father's workload — he visits China next week — she insisted: "Everything will be fine."

But the presence in the presidential party of a heart surgeon was a reminder of the heavy burden on a man with a history of health problems.

Thai PM to resign amid market woe

Nick Cumming-Bruce in Bangkok

THAILAND'S prime minister succumbed to months of escalating economic pressure this week and announced that he would resign after parliament had passed key electoral and financial legislation.

Chavalit Yongchaiyudh's exit will please millions of Thais, who see him as an obstacle to economic recovery, but it plunges Thailand and its international creditors, including the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, into deep uncertainty as they await a successor.

Mr Chavalit's decision to step down came after a key political ally resigned as his chief economic adviser. The six-party governing coalition will now have to agree on a new head of government until a general election expected in February.

The choice will be crucial to whether Thailand gains some respite from the battering suffered by its share and currency markets or plunges into more turbulence that could spark political unrest.

Corporate executives and office workers joined anti-government demonstrations in Bangkok last month in frustration at the government's management of the crisis.

In the past four months the baht has fallen from 25 to the dollar to a historic low of 41. Shares have hit an eight-year low and business failures have prompted a string of suicides.

An almost $18 billion IMF-led financial bail-out has failed to stop the rot, not least because of fears that Mr Chavalit and his allies might seek to protect their interests by watering down the agreement.

The outcome will be keenly watched by neighbouring countries hit by the collapse of investor confidence triggered by Thailand's troubles. Indonesia agreed an even bigger package with the IMF last week, but its currency appreciated sharply on Monday as markets backed reform plans.

IMF aid, page 19



Villagers from Lake Murray Station, in Papua New Guinea's Western Province, carry sacks of rice delivered by the Australian army to people suffering from the country's severe drought PHOTO: DAVID GRAY

Truckers drive Jospin into a corner

Paul Webster in Paris

FRENCH lorry drivers set up roadblocks across the country on Monday as the Socialist-led government tried to arrange urgent talks to stop the mass protest sinking into violence. Riot police were mobilised to keep open the main Spanish and German border crossings.

The French administration was preparing a tough plan to free access to refineries and motorways if talks on Tuesday fail to reach a settlement. Last November the previous government stood aside from a similar conflict that paralysed the country for 12 days.

The truckers are striking in support of claims for a $1,600 minimum monthly wage and shorter working hours.

While the interior ministry prepared more police action to keep private traffic flowing and ensure food and petrol supplies, the transport minister, Jean-Claude Gayssot, held preliminary talks in Paris with employers' representatives. Delegates of the biggest hauliers' federation, UFT, which walked out of talks last week, met Mr Gayssot and said they were ready, in principle, to attend the full meeting with Communist, Socialist and independent drivers' unions.

With leftwing critics accusing him of swinging towards rightwing policies, the prime minister, Lionel Jospin, cannot afford a truckers' protest like that which shook Alain Juppé's Gaullist-led government last year. Even a settlement was unlikely to ease criticism of Mr Jospin, who faces challenges from government partners including the Socialist militant left, the Communists and the Greens over economic and social policy.

The 250,000 long-distance and local-delivery drivers represented by Communist-led, Socialist-led and autonomous unions are angry because Mr Jospin's government, elected in June, has not enforced agreements on overtime and pay that were negotiated at the end of last year's demonstrations.

About 10,000 firms where drivers allege they receive little more than the minimum wage of about $1,100 a month for a 60-hour week have been consulted about the strike.

After contacts between transport ministry officials and owners last week, it was clear that the government blamed bosses for the threatened showdown because they had not honoured promises made on bonuses and wages nearly a year ago. Relations between the government and employers have worsened since talks on a 35-hour week broke down.

A clear warning to respect union claims was given by the Socialist party spokesman, François Hollande. But there was no sign that Mr Jospin, who keeps a firm control on the party despite having resigned from leadership of it, would intervene personally.

Mr Jospin has been distracted by attacks within his coalition government over issues including tough policing proposals, heavier social security levies and the maintenance of repressive anti-immigration laws.

Europe's Transport Commissioner, Neil Kinnock, refused to condemn the truckers or to say the blockade was an abuse of the right to strike.

The Week

MORE than 150 countries emerged deadlocked in Bonn from 10 days of talks aimed at combating global warming, stymied by an earlier announcement by the US that it had postponed cutting its own greenhouse gas emissions.

NORWAY'S prime minister, Kjell Magne Bondevik, pledged $28 million to help children trapped in poverty at a conference on child labour in Oslo.
Comment, page 12

MAURICE Papon, who is charged with crimes against humanity for the wartime deportation of Jews, was brought to a Bordeaux court in an ambulance following a week in hospital with bronchitis. After the opening of the prosecution's case, he was taken back to hospital.

BRITAIN'S attempts to regain the initiative in the Lockerbie bombing affair suffered a setback when Libya said it was impossible for the two suspects to get a fair trial in Scotland.

A RETIRED couple in Minnesota, in the US, have adopted the Israeli spy Mordechai Vanunu in the hope of securing his release.

TWO brothers, Saber Abu and Mahmoud el-Ulla, were sentenced to death for killing nine Germans and an Egyptian outside Cairo's Egyptian Museum in September.

THE trial of the second man charged with the Oklahoma City bombing, which killed 169 people in 1995, began. The case against Terry Nichols follows the conviction of Timothy McVeigh, who was sentenced to death in June.

THERE were serious doubts about Yasser Arafat's health after the European Union's special Middle East envoy, Miguel Moratinos, claimed that the Palestinian leader was "suffering from a physical and psychological crisis".

SOUTH Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission won a reprieve from attacks on its credibility when a witness claimed he had been forced to frame its chief investigator, Dumisa Ntsebeza, by linking him with an apartheid-era guerrilla massacre.

THE Spanish supreme court convicted two senior Socialist party officials of illegal party financing, court sources said. Senator Josep Maria Sala was jailed for three years and former congressman Carlos Navarro received an eight-year sentence.

SAMUEL FULLER, one of Hollywood's outstanding film-makers, has died aged 86.
Obituary next week

Cambodia's new harvest of death

Nick Cumming-Bruce in Phnom Penh

FIFTEEN minutes digging exposed a pale, bloated finger jutting from the red mud. Another hour of toil under the burning sun and the diggers, faces masked against the stench of decomposing flesh, half shovelled, half rolled the body on to a straw mat and lifted it clear of the grave.

Twenty years after Pol Pot's rule collapsed, and four years after a United Nations-run election, Cambodia's rice fields are again yielding a grim harvest of political atrocity.

This was the second body investigators plucked from the lonely spot, across a rain-filled stream and behind a clump of bushes in Oudong district, two hours' drive but just 40km as the crow flies northwest from Phnom Penh.

A further hour's work washing mud from the corpse revealed a tattoo that would help to identify it as Chao Sambath, a royalist intelligence general captured during the coup in July that ousted Cambodia's senior prime minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

Four months on, graves such as this are casting a long shadow over attempts by Hun Sen, Prince Ranariddh's former co-prime minister and now Cambodia's undisputed boss, to win the recognition and legitimacy he craves.

They also pose a dilemma for Britain and other Western governments pondering whether to provide financial and technical support for elections Hun Sen is promising to hold next year as proof that Cambodia's constitution and fledgling democracy is alive and well. The corpses retrieved from the mud of Oudong make clear they are not.

On a first visit two weeks earlier, investigators dug up the body of another royalist general, Krouch Yoeum, his legs bound and hands chopped off. Official comments on the death said he had died resisting arrest. But his corpse told a different story: his arms were broken and he had been shot in the back of the head.

The two were among close to 50 royalist military men the UN Centre for Human Rights has confirmed were summarily executed in the days after the coup. The number edges higher every month and looks perhaps double this number. Analysts note that Hun Sen loyalists appear to have specifically targeted for liquidation the hard core of the royalist army structure.

So low are opinions of Prince Ranariddh and the corruption and incompetence his party brought to government that some Western diplomatic missions in Phnom Penh appear disposed to view the killings as a distraction from the main issue of whether elections will restore stable government.

To mollify international opinion, Hun Sen has promised to investigate abuses. Late last month he wrote to the UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan, assuring him that opposition MPs who fled Cambodia after the coup would be free to campaign, and inviting observers to monitor the ballot. In what would be a major climbdown, some speculate he may even allow the now exiled Prince Ranariddh back to fight the election.

His actions, however, are less reassuring. Authorities have yet to punish anyone for the grenade attack on an opposition politician, Sam Rainsy, which killed 18 people in April. Investigations of executions in July have met obstruction and outright intimidation.

"There is a pervasive climate of impunity," a Western diplomat in Phnom Penh said. "If you are on the right side you can do what you want. The message to voters and candidates is: be careful."



A soldier stands guard as Balkan leaders arrive for a summit in Crete this week PHOTO: DIMITR MESS

Greek court orders Bonn to pay $33m

Helena Smith in Athens

IGNORING protests from Bonn, thousands of Greeks insisted last week that they would "fight" to get Germany to honour a court decision ordering it to provide compensation for crimes committed under the Nazi occupation.

In a landmark ruling, a court in the central Greek city of Livadia, said Germany should pay $33 million in reparations to a village whose residents were butchered by a Waffen-SS unit in 1944. The slaughter of 218 men, women and children in Distomo is one of the worst atrocities of Nazi occupation of Greece.

Yiannis Stamoulis, the local governor who launched a campaign for compensation, said the verdict would encourage "hundreds of thousands" of Greeks to seek damages.

"The 35-page ruling was reached after 10 months of deliberation . . . Its scientific argumentation cannot be denied or discounted even by Bonn," Mr Stamoulis, who is also a lawyer and former MEP, said. His district has 3,100 claimants.

Greece suffered appallingly during the three years the swastika flew over the Acropolis. About 130,000 people were executed in different parts of the country, while about 300,000 more died of starvation. The ruins of villages that were pillaged and burnt by Nazi soldiers still scar the landscape. Greeks say that, unlike other occupied countries, they were never adequately compensated.

"In 1960, Germany handed the Greek state the laughable amount of 115 million marks [$68 million] in reparations," Mr Stamoulis said.

German officials dismissed the issue as moribund last week, saying that no court had jurisdiction over another country. "The [Greek court's] decision violates international law," said Alexander Allach, a government spokesman.

Although the German government is keen to close the book on the matter of wartime reparations, having paid out around DM100 billion worldwide since 1945, the issue will not lie down.

Jewish organisations were locked in negotiations in Bonn this week seeking pensions for thousands of Holocaust survivors in eastern Europe who have been largely ignored in the postwar reparations.

And a Bonn court is expected to issue a ruling next week in the case of former slave labourers forced to work in German industry under the Nazis who are now demanding compensation. If the court rules in their favour, it could open the floodgates to thousands of additional claims.

Tough pragmatist topples NZ leader

Barbara Harper

NEW ZEALAND, the first country to give women the vote, may soon have its first woman prime minister.

Jenny Shipley, the transport minister, was confirmed as leader of the National Party this week after forcing Jim Bolger to announce that he will stand down as prime minister within weeks. Mr Bolger gave up the party leadership rather than face a challenge from Ms Shipley, who had garnered the support of most National Party MPs.

Ms Shipley, aged 45, quietly collected letters of support while Mr Bolger was in Edinburgh at last month's Commonwealth summit. She delivered an ultimatum to him on Monday.

After a day of talks with Ms Shipley, the prime minister delivered a terse statement that "changing circumstances" made it appropriate for him to step down. "I plan to work with my successor to achieve an orderly and successful transition," Mr Bolger said.

He indicated that he would stay on as prime minister until after an Asia-Pacific summit later this month and a trip to China.



Shipley: poised to become PM

Mr Bolger, aged 62, has been prime minister for seven years. Since last October's election, the country's first under proportional representation, his party has held power through a uncomfortable coalition with the New Zealand First party.

Opinion polls have reflected a collapse in public confidence in the coalition, which has a single-vote majority.

If Ms Shipley becomes prime minister, both New Zealand's main parties will be headed by women. Helen Clark, leader of the Labour Party, came close to becoming prime minister at the last election.

Ms Shipley, a former school teacher and daughter of a church minister, has a reputation as a pragmatist who does not shirk tough decisions. She is best known for dismantling much of what was left of the country's once vaunted social welfare system during her term as social welfare minister in the early 1990s. She was demonised by protesters and her effigy was burnt in the streets.

Further unpopularity awaited when she became health minister and set about putting hospitals on a commercial footing.

Mr Bolger moved her from the health portfolio after the last election in an attempt to smooth relations with the junior coalition partner, the New Zealand First party, which wanted more money spent on health and welfare. However, as minister for state enterprises, she pushed ahead with privatisations that went against the spirit of the coalition agreement.

Northerner wins Irish poll

John Mullin

MARY McALEESE, a 46-year-old law professor, last week became the first person from Northern Ireland to become Irish president. As head of state, she is the only Irish citizen who needs her government's express permission to travel abroad.

On the second count of votes Ms McAleese secured 59 per cent of the poll, and her closest challenger, Mary Banotti of the Fine Gael opposition party, got 41 per cent.

Ms McAleese, pro vice-chancellor at Queen's University, Belfast, seemed to be in trouble when leaked government papers suggested she was a Sinn Fein sympathiser. But it rebounded in her favour.

The new president, anti-abortion and against divorce, is a nationalist, but says she wants to work with Unionists. She has indicated that her first move as Ireland's eighth president may be to invite the Queen to Dublin in what would be the first visit by a British monarch. The two dined at Buckingham Palace last year.

The result of last week's election was a formality almost as soon as counting began. Only 50 per cent of Ireland's 2.7 million voters voted against 64 per cent when Mary Robinson was elected in 1990.

Ms McAleese was close to winning outright on the first count in the single transferable vote system, taking 45.2 per cent of first preference votes. Her nearest challenger, Ms Banotti, the Dublin MEP, was the first choice of 29.3 per cent. The other three candidates were then eliminated, and their votes transferred. Ms McAleese eased through.

The singer Dana, derided at the outset, came third with 13.8 per cent of first preference votes. Adi Roche, the one-time front-runner and anti-nuclear campaigner, was fourth with Derek Nally bottom of the poll.

Meanwhile detectives in Dublin investigating the leaking of secret government documents last week which indicated that Ms McAleese was sympathetic to Sinn Fein, arrested a former ministerial aide.

Officers from the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation raided the man's home in Dublin. He was being questioned about an alleged breach of the Official Secrets Act.

The department of foreign affairs documents about Ms McAleese were sent to the press and were published last month.

New trial sought for British nanny

Joanna Coles and Ed Vulliamy in Cambridge, Massachusetts

LAWYERS for Louise Woodward, the 19-year-old British au pair convicted last week of murdering her eight-month-old charge, Matthew Eappen, demanded that the judge, Hiller Zobel, order an immediate retrial on the basis that the prosecution failed to submit crucial photographic evidence in its possession for nine months, which would have dramatically altered the course of the trial.

They argued that because the two photographs, which came to light only after the chief medical examiner, Michael Feigin, found them while cleaning out a cupboard, were submitted only two days before the end of the trial, the defence was prevented from properly cross-examining witnesses.

While Woodward's lawyers argued that the evidence was "insufficient to support a conviction of any offence", they would ask that the judge "none the less enter a finding of guilty of the lesser offence of manslaughter" if a retrial was denied.

The prosecution said that the defence should not be permitted to "proceed with an all or nothing strategy, sample the jury's verdict and then elect to move for a reduction to the very charge [manslaughter] they opposed sending to the jury".

On Thursday last week, the jury returned a verdict of second degree murder, which carries a mandatory life sentence with no consideration of parole before 15 years.

Asked by the judge if she had anything to say, Woodward replied: "I'd just like to maintain my innocence. I never hurt Matty. I would never hurt Matty. I don't know what happened to him. I am not responsible for his death."

On Monday, the prosecution reminded the judge that the court was duty-bound to instruct the jury if he thought manslaughter an appropriate charge. Woodward herself had "vigorously opposed any instruction on manslaughter".

But Woodward's lawyers argued that the missing photographic evidence was grounds enough for a retrial. Citing a previous judgment, they said: "It is enough that on a full and reasonable assessment of the trial record, the absent evidence would have played an important role in the jury's deliberations and conclusions, even though it is not certain the evidence would have produced a verdict of not guilty."

They also alleged that the chief medical examiner, who knew of the photographs' existence, was guilty of acting improperly. They added that "a cross-examination of Dr Feigin, in particular, concerning these photographs would have effectively impeached his testimony" had the photographs been available earlier.

At the centre of the defence argument is the claim that the photographs, recognised by both sides to be "indisputably better images than those admitted during the prosecution's case", showed "observable healing on the edges of the skull fracture", which Dr Feigin denied.

Such evidence would confirm the defence's argument that Matthew had been injured several weeks before February 4, the day on which the prosecution said Woodward had shaken him or slammed him against a hard surface with sufficient force to kill him.

The prosecution dismissed the grounds for retrial on the basis of later disclosure of the photographs as "specious". Though the prosecution admitted disclosure had been "sudden", it argued that the defendant was not disadvantaged because the photos were taken at the same time and showed the same subject matter as photographs previously disclosed.

They added that at the time of the trial the defence had been "apparently satisfied" with arrangements for dealing with the late admission of the evidence.

The defence also demanded a new trial on the basis that the judge should have told jurors they were restricted to the question of whether Woodward murdered the baby by beating him on February 4 — and on no other day.

Earlier, the prosecuting district attorney, Thomas Reilly, said the jury should have been given the option of returning a manslaughter verdict.

He told BBC TV: "I think it's important to realise that in a normal case — and it's the first time it's ever happened in my experience — the jury would normally have been instructed on manslaughter, no matter what Louise Woodward or her lawyers had said about it."

Three of the 12 jurors admitted they would have preferred the option of a manslaughter charge. Though they said they had all agreed that Woodward was guilty of committing violence which led to Matthew's death, returning a manslaughter verdict would have allowed the judge greater discretion in sentencing.

As vigils were held throughout Britain and money continued to flood into the Woodward appeal fund, demonstrations took place outside the Cambridge courtroom.

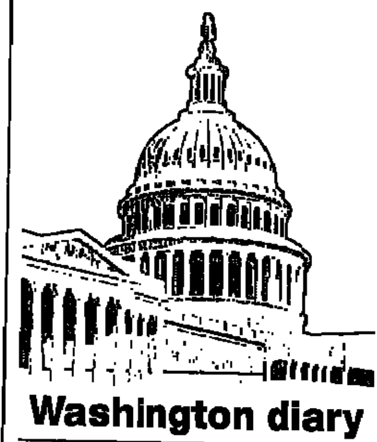
Protesting her daughter's innocence, Sue Woodward, aged 40, said: "I won't stop fighting for her while I've got a breath left in my body. For she's an innocent, an innocent child. And they've made a horrendous mistake."

Before sentence was passed, Sunil and Deborah Eappen, as parents of the victim, were allowed to make an "impact statement", a recent court innovation designed to let relatives of victims have an impact on discretionary sentencing. In a long and moving tribute, Mrs Eappen talked of Matthew as a "happy, smiley baby".

The minimum sentence for second degree murder is 15 years, after which Ms Woodward would be assessed for parole. But if she failed to accept responsibility for Matthew's death, she would be deemed by the parole board as having shown no remorse — a prerequisite for early release — and her application would automatically be thrown out.

Comment, page 12
Cradle of trust, page 24

He came, he saw, but Jiang didn't conquer



Washington diary

Martin Kettle

JULIUS CAESAR said that he came, he saw and he conquered. Eighteen years ago, when Deng Xiaoping made the first visit to the United States by a Chinese leader, that was pretty much how it felt then too. But in Jiang Zemin's case last week, it was different. He came, he was seen and then he went away again, leaving American opinion just as divided over China now as it was before his arrival.

That is not how the Chinese, who, after all, made up 50 per cent of last week's Washington summit, see it. The Chinese media carried extensive and respectful coverage of President Jiang's week in the United States. The formalities of the visit to the White House were shown at length on Chinese television news bulletins — even to the extent of the national anthems and the 21-gun salute being rebroadcast uncut. Shorn of all protests and disagreement, the broadcast had the effect of showing China's leader being greeted by the US president as a respected equal.

In Washington — as in any imperial capital — they see it differently. Jiang's visit was a calculated risk for a nation that recognises a great power when it sees one, but which remains preoccupied with ensuring that relations between two such nations take place in a moral and political framework in which the last word, and the principal trade advantage, ought to lie with the Americans.

Much of Jiang's visit was taken up with a somewhat bizarre series of photo-opportunities in scenic and folksy corners of the US. He went swimming off Hawaii. He donned a tricorn hat during a visit to colonial Williamsburg in Virginia. He had intended to pose by the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, but that was cancelled because of demonstrations. On Friday last week he went through with a scheduled ringing of the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange, though maybe it was not the ideal week to do that. And last Saturday, he strolled through leafy Harvard university, strutting his stuff as a philosopher president.

Few of these photo-ops appeared back in China, so presumably they were planned for the benefit of US public opinion in the hope that they would show a smiling and self-aware Asian tiger roaming through the American jungle. If so, they were largely a failure.

This is because US public opinion has insisted on seeing this visit through the prism of the human rights issue. This was the first visit to the US by a Chinese leader since the Tiananmen repression eight years ago, and the first since the uneasy transition in Hong Kong at the end of June. Troubled memories of those events have scarcely dimmed here, and they have been underscored by a series of recent films — Seven Years In Tibet, Red Corner, and the soon to be released Kundun — which have once more highlighted both human rights and the continuing annexation of Tibet. Put that together with a voluble pro-Taiwan lobby, and it is scarcely surprising that the Jiang visit has been overshadowed by human rights concerns and protests.



In that context it was inevitable that the principal event of the visit was the White House press conference given by the two leaders after their meeting. This was an occasion on which the US media was on its mettle, anxious to fulfil its own self-image by asking hard questions to the visiting leader. The hard questions — about Tiananmen, imprisoned dissidents, Taiwan and Tibet — were duly asked, but it was Jiang's uncompromisingly tough answers to them which defined the visit more than any other episode.

This was a difficult moment for Clinton, and you could see that he felt the mantle of leader-of-the-free-world on his shoulders as he prepared to respond to Jiang's po-faced justification of the Tiananmen Square deaths. But the US leader passed the test well, making his points with force but without overstepping the protocols that required him to act the polite host.

Before the Jiang visit began, the White House had tried to play down expectations that much would come out of it. Summits should be routine and uneventful, the national security adviser, Sandy Berger said; don't expect them to be full of goodies. But that isn't Clinton's style. The US president is a natural summiteer, and he unwrapped plenty of goodies that fully justified, from his own point of view, the holding of a visit that was otherwise full of pitfalls for such a ratings-aware political leader.

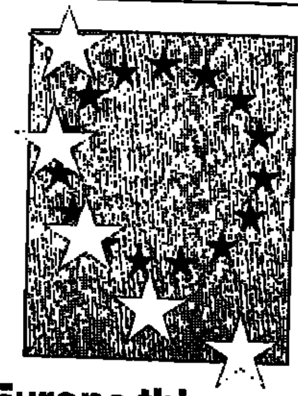
The centrepiece of the unwrapping was the much trailed quid pro quo between Washington and Beijing over nuclear trade. China agreed, in writing, to stop feeding nuclear know-how to the Third World, and especially to Iran. In return, Washington promised to lift a 12-year-old ban on nuclear co-operation with China. This was, the president said, a "win-win-win" deal for America, advancing US security, trade and environmental interests all in one go.

The trade element is the most indisputable of these three, since a group of US companies, led by Westinghouse, reckons that the deal will net them up to $15 billion worth of business over the next few years, with more to come. But it is also clear that, in the long run, Chinese economic expansion will be a boom not just for China but for all those nations, not only the US, which can supply the Chinese with clean energy technology, whether in power generation, domestic appliance or, above all, the motor car.

In a week in which statistics have been flying thick and fast through the Washington air, perhaps the best one to remember is that China has 1.2 billion people but still only 3 million cars. Those who seek a guiding star for US policy towards China will find that is one they can steer by for several years to come.

Washington Post, page 15

Employment initiatives are just the job



Europe this week

Martin Walker

IT IS always a pleasant surprise when a politician admits to error and promises to change the way of doing things. And when the issue in question is the use of the European Union's structural and social funds, now running at well over $30 billion a year, the confession of past failure by the European commissioner for employment and social affairs, Padraig Flynn, was remarkable.

"Why is reform necessary?" Flynn asked a conference on employment in Barcelona. "Because our present policies have failed. Each year, our present policies result in 2 million people being added to long-term unemployment in Europe. One in five of our young people leave our education and social systems with no marketable qualifications. Only one in 10 of all Europe's unemployed ever gets into a training programme."

Hence the Commission's new employment strategy, which will be the focal point of this month's jobs summit, to target both training and the long-term unemployed. But it was unfortunate that Flynn's remarks came at the press conference for the opening of the Integra meeting, rather than at the end. Had he remained for the full two days of the conference on finding jobs for the socially excluded he might have learned something of value, as this reporter certainly did.

It was not just the usefulness of local governments, non-governmental organisations and social workers coming together from all over Europe to share their experience of dealing with long-term unemployment and discuss the particular problems of finding work for the disabled, for ex-prisoners and the ethnic minorities. It was also the perception that whether in Finland or Spain, Scotland or Sicily, the real problem of the long-term unemployed was the psychological one of bringing people out of despair, and the financial, housing and family crises that afflict people out of work for two years and more. There was another lesson: that in trying to cut the immediate costs of social and public services, we are beginning to resemble Oscar Wilde's cynic, who knows "the price of everything and the value of nothing".

Take the example of Robert Marshall's programme, called Glasgow Works, which has so far put almost 1,000 long-unemployed Glaswegians into full-time work or full-time education. Its most visible success are the City Centre guides in their distinctive jackets. They might be called Redcoats but for the unfortunate historical echoes of the uniform worn by the English armies who put down the Scottish risings of 1715 and 1745.

There are 44 of the guides at any given time. In teams of two, they are given a street to patrol in the city centre or its West End. They have small radios, to contact the police, the social services, or another council office to arrange the removal of rubbish or abandoned cars, or to summon the Glasgow Works graffiti-cleaning crew. They help tourists, look after lost children, act as unofficial special constables, and have had a striking impact on local crime and civic order.

On average, they last about nine months in the job, and then almost invariably get another full-time job because the profile and the image of the city guides stands so high with local employers. And having held down a responsible and useful job, the guides themselves are transformed from being "a problem", as one of the long-term unemployed, to being a self-confident and palpably useful citizen.

"The key to everything we do is that we start by giving people a job. We don't trawl the unemployment office. We advertise in the local papers, for a child care worker, for example, simply noting at the bottom of the ad that you must live in Glasgow and have been out of work for at least a year," explains Marshall, who used to work in London for Shelter, the homeless charity.

Glasgow Works uses a client's unemployment benefit, topped up money from the EU social fund and with some other resources from the city council, gives each new applicant some training, and then sets them to work. As well as the city guides, they have another remarkable scheme under which the long-term unemployed are trained to become job stewards for disabled people. They work individually to train their disabled clients for job interviews, accompany them to the interview, help them arrange transport, liaise with the employer, and make follow-up visits.

GLASGOW WORKS was devising its programme just as the Netherlands was setting up its own "Stadwacht" service, which gives the long-term unemployed some training, a uniform and a radio, 120 per cent of the minimum wage, and sends them into a small neighbourhood to become a kind of special constable. They are sometimes called Melkert jobs after the Dutch employment minister Ad Melkert, who has boasted of his new job creation scheme reflecting Dutch values: "We are restoring a feeling of safety in cities by introducing the 'Stadswacht' street patrols and bringing back tram conductors," he said.

Glasgow Works has looked at providing bus conductors, but so far avoided what could be a brush with trade unions, who currently support their programmes, but look askance at the prospect of established jobs being undermined by cheap, subsidised labour. Glasgow Works has learned a lot from similar schemes in other European countries. They decided to send their job stewards to the job interviews their clients get, after seeing that it worked in a similar project in Genk, in Belgium.

This European connection works both ways. In Portugal and Spain, local groups working with refugees have learned from the pioneering work of the London Borough of Ealing, that by training a young refugee as a journalist or broadcaster for their own community they provide an extremely useful service to other demoralised refugee groups, who suddenly have an information service and a point of reference. This, in turn, gives the trainee journalist the experience and self-confidence to go on to a career in the media.

None of this is easy. Nor is it cheap, unless you count the wider and longer-term social cost of abandoning the long-term unemployed or at-risk groups to the despair of life on welfare. Nor does it fit easily into grand national or pan-European schemes of job creation. The Glasgow Works ploy of using unemployment benefits to help pay a wage fits so badly with the British legal and benefits system that it had to be called "a pilot project" to get off the ground. Still, on current trends, Glasgow Works alone will have cut the city's long-term unemployed by a third within five years.

Jordan's king clamps down on press

Julian Borger in Amman

HARSH censorship laws have muzzled Jordan's newspapers in advance of Tuesday's parliamentary elections, forcing 13 weeklies to close and setting back freedom of expression by decades, journalists and opposition parties complain.

At a recent conference co-sponsored by Jordanian liberal groups and the London-based anti-censorship organisation Article 19, journalists said the press laws had imposed a blanket of fear and self-censorship.

King Hussein altered the press law by royal decree in May, setting a minimum capital requirement for any weekly publication of 300,000 Jordanian dinars ($445,000), while extending the list of officially taboo subjects to the armed forces and security services. The amendment also included a vaguely worded ban on articles "which include false information or rumours that lead to harming the general interest, or government institutions, or its workers". Fines for breaking the press laws were raised 15-fold, and offending newspapers are threatened with suspension.

"What we do all day long is self-censorship. We hate it, but this is the way it is," said George Hawatmeh, the editor of the Jordan Times and head of the new Arab Media Institute in Amman.

Before imposing the restrictions, the king complained about journalists' "deteriorating morals", and said they were distorting Jordan's image.

The opposition claims the restrictions are designed to stifle dissent in the run-up to the elections. The main Islamist opposition bloc and several prominent liberals are boycotting the poll, accusing the government of trying to manipulate the outcome.

Taher Masri, a former prime minister who has joined the boycott, said: "The spirit of free journalism is on the way down . . . It's like we were back 40 or 50 years ago under martial law."

Martial law was formally lifted in 1991 after 34 years, as part of a general liberalisation policy that began with the first free elections in 1989. That process, the government's critics say, has been put into reverse to counter opposition to Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel and economic austerity measures.

The foreign minister, Fayez Tarawneh, defended the press laws, arguing that the weekly tabloids had abused press freedom and become irresponsible. "If they hear any rumour in any salon in Amman, the next day it is a headline," he said. "When they write something they can't substantiate and which affects the dignity of the people, of officials or other Arab officials . . . sometimes they are questioned."

Said Essoulani, who heads the Article 19 department that monitors the Arab world, said: "There were provocative articles, but this is the price you pay for democracy." He said Jordan had been among the leading Arab states — Egypt, Morocco and Lebanon — as far as press freedom was concerned but had "slipped out of the top league" in recent months.

An Article 19 report, Blaming The Press: Jordan's Democratisation Process in Crisis, presented at the conference, listed 63 cases in which newspapers had been prosecuted under catch-all charges such as "infringing on morals and ethics", "insulting the president of an Arab country" and "infringing on the dignity of the people".

Washington Post, page 15

Surreal win in ghost poll

COLOMBIA DIARY
Jeremy Lennard

GABRIEL García Márquez, Colombia's Nobel prize-winning novelist and grandfather of magic realism, claims that the harsh daily reality of violence and poverty in Colombia is tempered by sublime and slightly surreal forces.

All very well, but when these qualities of illusion colour major political events, it might be worth asking a few questions. After months of violence and intimidation, which saw the murder of scores of local officials and the kidnapping of many more, Colombians went to the polls in nationwide local elections on October 26. By polling day, some 2,000 candidates had withdrawn; in some towns there was no one left to vote for.

The government and much of the media trumpeted the elections as a victory for peace and democracy, which to many was about as believable as a bicycling fish. Granted there was not too much violence on polling day, but this was due to the presence of 200,000 soldiers on the streets. No one seemed to notice the contradiction of banner headlines shouting "*paz y democracia*" alongside pictures of tanks at town halls and AK 47s resting on ballot boxes.

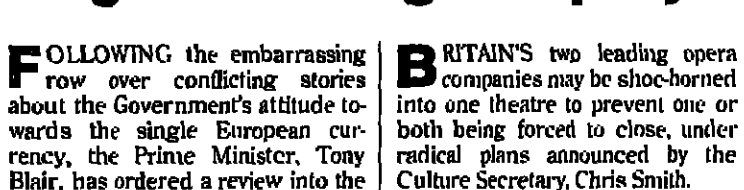
Nearly 10 million people voted for peace, we were told. But more than 10 million people didn't. Why? Fear certainly played its part. In some areas, dominated by leftwing guerrillas and rightwing paramilitaries, the turnout was less than 1 per cent, and in several towns the new mayor was elected on just one vote.

But despite raging poverty and public disorder, this is not a country of political activists. Recent history explains why. The last time the radical left tried to organise itself as the Patriotic Union, 3,500 of its members were murdered over 10 years, until the movement gave up politics.

So, on the surface the public is abstaining and accepting — an image reinforced by extreme politeness and formality. But, and this takes us back to García Márquez, little in Colombia is quite what it seems. The same people who wouldn't say boo to a political goose hide a fiery and unpredictable alter ego. Friends and lives are lost over garage bills and football results.

In the early eighties, the British group Chumbawumba twisted the title of a Sex Pistols album to Never Mind The Ballots — Here's The Rest Of Your Life. A better maxim for Colombia may be hard to find.

The Week in Britain James Lewis



Sultans of spin to head 'rogue briefings' inquiry

FOLLOWING the embarrassing row over conflicting stories about the Government's attitude towards the single European currency, the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, has ordered a review into the role of spin doctors. But it will be headed by the Government's two leading practitioners of spin — Peter Mandelson, the Minister without Portfolio, and Alastair Campbell, Mr Blair's press spokesman.

The intention is to stop "rogue" stories being allowed to run unchallenged as representing government policy. The review could, however, also result in government advisers and spokesmen relying less on so-called spin and more on statements made formally and on the record.

The review committee will also include Sir Robin Butler, head of the civil service, who has expressed concern about the exodus of senior Whitehall information officers since Labour came to power in May. Eight have gone in just six months amid complaints that they were being squeezed out by a Labour team of politically-motivated "special advisers".

Information fed "off the record" to selected journalists by a Treasury special adviser, Charles Whelan, was blamed for the débâcle over the market-sensitive single currency issue, and even Mr Campbell was forced to admit that spin doctors had become too much a part of the stories they were putting about.

Under proposals now being looked at, Mr Campbell would be named in stories about which he commented. And individual ministers would have official spokesmen who would be described as such in newspaper reports. No longer will political journalists have to depend for important information on unnamed "sources close to" the minister.

DETAILS of next year's referendum on whether London should have an elected mayor were announced by the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, who immediately provoked criticism over the question to be asked.

Voters will be faced, on May 7, with just one question: "Are you in favour of the Government's proposals for a Greater London Authority, made up of an elected mayor and a separately elected assembly?"

The politico novelist and Tory, Lord Archer, currently the front runner for the job of mayor, said it was insulting to present Londoners with an "all or nothing" choice. They should be asked, separately, whether they wanted an assembly, and whether they wanted an executive mayor.

He was supported by the leftwing Labour MP Ken Livingstone, leader of the former Greater London Council. He, too, has shown an interest in the job, but believes the mayoralty should go to the leader of the largest group in an elected assembly.

Richard Branson is also touted as a runner but has yet to state his intentions. It is thought that the rules would require the Virgin entrepreneur to give up his business interests.

Mr Prescott defended what he called a balanced package: "There is no sound case for a mayor without an assembly, or an assembly without a mayor."

BRITAIN'S two leading opera companies may be shoe-horned into one theatre to prevent one or both being forced to close, under radical plans announced by the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith.

English National Opera would abandon its London Coliseum base and join the Royal Opera and Royal Ballet at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, which is currently being redeveloped at a cost of £213 million. Mr Smith said the Government could no longer afford to subsidise the companies in their present homes.

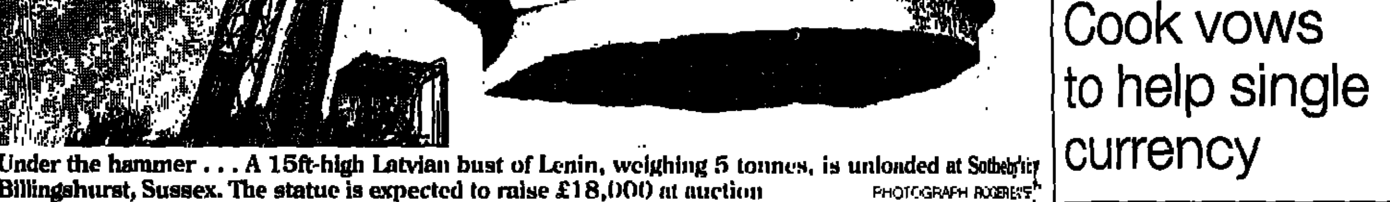
The Royal Opera has had a disastrous start to its first of two years in exile while its Covent Garden home is rebuilt, with losses expected to reach £750,000 for the first half of this season. A board meeting was told that 230 casual staff had not been paid for up to three months, that some pay cheques for backstage crews had bounced, and that another round of redundancies was on the cards. The management has been heavily criticised by the Arts Council and was last week described as "a shambles" by Gerald Kaufman, the chairman of a Commons select committee investigating its performance.

A RETIRED railway worker, Anthony Sawoniuk, aged 76, from Bermondsey, London, has been charged with war crimes allegedly committed in Nazi-occupied Europe. He denied murdering five Jews in 1942 in his home town in Belarus, and was released on bail. He is the second man to be prosecuted under the 1990 War Crimes Act.

BRITAIN formally asked Brazil to extradite Ronald Biggs, who escaped from a London prison after serving only 15 months of a 30-year sentence for his part in the £2.6 million "Great Train Robbery". He has lived for 27 years in Brazil which, until this year, had no extradition treaty with the United Kingdom.

Biggs, now 68, who has made a career as an author, raconteur and tourist attraction in his South American haven, may well remain there under a statute of limitation. Even his one-time pursuer, former Detective Superintendent Jack Slipper, thought he should be left alone. He said he would probably be a drain on the National Health Service and would want to draw a pension.





Under the hammer . . . A 15ft-high Latvian bust of Lenin, weighing 5 tonnes, is unloaded at Sotheby's in Billingshurst, Sussex. The statue is expected to raise £18,000 at auction PHOTOGRAPH ROGERS

Britain blamed for volcano 'fiasco'

Ian Black

THE chief minister of the volcano-stricken island of Montserrat, David Brandt, last week demanded a judicial inquiry into the "fiasco" of Britain's handling of the crisis, which he said had contributed to the deaths of islanders.

Mr Brandt told the Commons select committee on international development that conditions in emergency shelters in the north of the Caribbean dependency were "not as good as the conditions in which they keep cattle in the UK". He also accused Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, of giving "inaccurate and misleading" evidence when she testified to the committee last month.

Sensitive to criticism over Montserrat after Ms Short's "golden elephants" gaffe in the summer, Downing Street insisted Mr Brandt's charges were "unfounded".

The chief minister appeared to have misunderstood correspondence about new housing between Tony Blair and the Jamaican government, officials said.

Mr Brandt said he blamed Britain for the deaths of 19 islanders on June 25 after failing to provide proper housing in the wake of the Soufriere Hills volcano erupting back into life in July 1995.

"The loss of life was a direct consequence of the failure to make reasonably adequate housing available two years after the crisis," he said in written evidence. Two weeks ago, Ms Short told the committee that decision-making over the crisis was "dreadful" because of the sheer number of different players involved.

With officials complaining of an "alphabet soup" of overlapping authorities and departments, Ms Short has spoken of her frustration at the slowness of the Montserrat government in dealing with the emergency.

Mr Brandt said last week: "This has been a demonstrable failure. It has allowed a degree of 'passing the buck' with the blame often being placed unfairly with the government of Montserrat. It is for that reason we are demanding an immediate and full judicial inquiry to determine the exact events and how we have arrived at this fiasco."

Britain has committed some £ million to aid the dependency since 1995. Of an original population of 11,000, only 2,500-3,000 people remain. Last year the island received twice as much aid as Ethiopia, which has 50 million people.

Mr Brandt has repeatedly charged that the Department for International Development does not have an incentive to improve conditions on Montserrat because it favours a complete evacuation. The department and the Foreign Office have repeatedly denied this.

On Britain's role in providing temporary housing in the north and Mr Brandt's suggestion that it had contributed to islanders' deaths, a spokesman insisted: "We moved as quickly and efficiently as we could to provide temporary housing in the north."

Short to end aid and trade programme

David Hencke

BRITAIN'S £73 million a year aid and trade programme, discredited after being linked to arms sales and the illegal funding of Malaysia's Pergau dam, is to be abolished.

Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, was expected to announce the decision this week as part of the first white paper on overseas aid policy for nearly 20 years.

The decision to replace the programme with development aid concentrating on the relief of poverty without damaging the environment follows a tense Whitehall battle between Ms Short's ministry, the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Treasury.

It is certain to be welcomed by aid charities and campaigning groups from the World Development Movement.

Companies which build large power stations, dams, roads, railways and communication systems have been the main beneficiaries of the aid and trade programme, which can contribute a third of the cost of projects costing as much as £300 million. Many of the contracts were won in competition with the French, Germans and Americans, who also offered subsidies. Companies had been lobbying the DTI to retain the funds.

Ms Short persuaded Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, to agree to the abolition of the programme.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, has also backed Ms Short's case to abolish the programme after internal reviews revealed that the benefits of aid funded by the taxpayer were not clear-cut, as sometimes the prices charged for equipment were higher than unsubsidised goods.

Under the deal the DTI will be able to keep a separate programme to aid industry, but the money will have to come from the ministry's existing resources, and the Government will not support schemes which break Labour's "ethical" foreign policy. This means that projects that damage the environment, exploit workers or infringe human rights will not be supported.

All schemes approved by the last government will be honoured, allowing the cash allocated to be phased out over the next three years.

The programmes have been heavily criticised for the environmental damage they do to developing countries, from destroying virgin rainforest to creating widespread industrial pollution.

Parliament's financial watchdog, the National Audit Office, has also condemned many aspects of the aid.

Tory euro wounds reopened

Michael White

WILLIAM HAGUE'S beleaguered leadership team was bracing itself for a renewal of the Conservative party's running civil war over Europe after further turmoil over the single currency came within an ace of delivering another defector into the Labour camp.

To the astonishment of some MPs, the pro-European campaigner Peter Temple-Morris was granted two face-to-face meetings with Tony Blair as he edged towards a private commitment to defect last weekend.

He drew back because rallying cries by the former Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, and the former Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, gave him fresh heart.

Last week, two pro-European MPs, Ian Taylor and David Curry, resigned from Mr Hague's team after the Conservative leader said that Britain should not enter into monetary union for at least 10 years.

But instead of conniving in another stage-managed defection, Mr Temple-Morris, a Tory backbencher for 23 years, called a press conference to declare: "I have now decided to stay within the Conservative party and do all I can — with others and under distinguished leadership — to resist and change this policy."

The dramatic change of heart was triggered by statements by Mr Heseltine and Mr Clarke in favour of early British membership of the euro.

Mr Heseltine used radio and TV interviews to unleash opinions he has long held in private. He predicted: "There is going to be a single currency. Short of nuclear war or something like that, the Europeans are going to do that. The only issue is when Britain joins, because join we will."

Big business, the party's traditional paymasters, increased pressure on Mr Hague by condemning the new hardline stance.

Labour officials who had been nursing Mr Temple-Morris through his proposed defection for weeks expressed their respect for the MP's courage and for his second thoughts. "Now that Clarke and Heseltine have done what they have done it's a fight worth fighting. So we wish him well," said one.

Ministers are licking their lips at the prospect of more Tory squabbling. It will take the heat off the Government's own, not dissimilar, tactical dilemmas. Mr Blair hopes to woo public opinion away from tabloid-driven Euro-scepticism in a referendum, probably after 2001.

Cook vows to help single currency

Ian Black

BRITAIN will give "the best start possible" to the European single currency when the historic decision on who joins is made in May — despite the Government's policy of waiting to make up its mind until after 1999, the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, promised this week.

Mr Cook insisted the Government is committed to the successful handling of the euro project during Britain's European Union presidency because it is "an issue that matters to the people of Europe".

Setting out a detailed agenda for "giving Europe back to the people", in an address to the Irish Institute for European Affairs in Dublin, Mr Cook sought to reassure fellow EU members that the euro will be safe in British hands when the key decisions are taken on who qualifies.

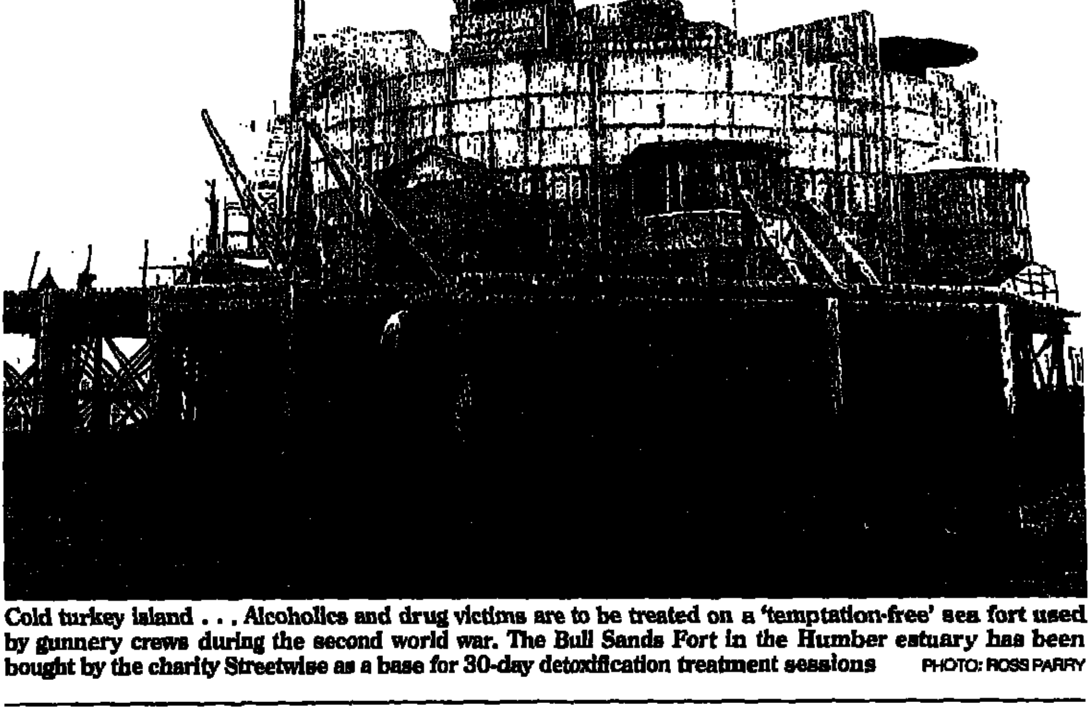
"We will discharge this responsibility to the best of our abilities, fully and scrupulously, in a way that shows our constructive approach to Europe at its best. We want economic and monetary union to be a success," he said.

"Even though we will not be taking part in the first wave in 1999, it is still in our interests that it should succeed. We will use our presidency to give Emu the best start we possibly can. This is an issue that matters to the people of Europe. We will not let them down."

With the tone of Britain's relations with Europe changed by signing the Social Chapter after the election, Mr Cook argued that people now need a union that is more relevant to their lives.

"The EU seems to spend too much of its time discussing things that do not touch people's lives, abstractions and theories rather than a concrete agenda," he said. "The people need to believe that their agenda is also our agenda. Britain has a mission as president of the European Union — to give Europe back to the people."

● The German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, will keep the door open for British membership of monetary union on the easiest of terms, despite the Government's decision to postpone UK entry until at least after the next election. Mr Kohl said he is prepared to waive the requirement that Britain should return to the exchange rate mechanism for two years before qualifying for monetary union, thereby enabling Britain to join as soon as the political decision is made.



Cold turkey island . . . Alcoholics and drug victims are to be treated on a 'temptation-free' sea fort used by gunnery crews during the second world war. The Bull Sands Fort in the Humber estuary has been bought by the charity Streetwise as a base for 30-day detoxification treatment sessions PHOTO: ROSS PARRY

MoD ignored warning on Gulf war vaccines

Richard Norton-Taylor

A COCKTAIL of drugs was given to British troops in the Gulf war despite an official warning about the risks involved, the Government admitted for the first time last week.

It also disclosed that three senior officials had been disciplined after a separate inquiry into how ministers had misled Parliament over the use of highly dangerous organophosphate pesticides during the conflict.

The disclosures, broadly welcomed by groups representing veterans suffering from alleged Gulf war syndrome, were made by the armed forces minister, John Reid.

Dr Reid said an internal inquiry had found the Ministry of Defence was warned by the Department of Health in 1990 about "anxieties" over the simultaneous use of anthrax vaccine and pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine unlicensed for adults.

It had not been possible, he said, to establish if the concerns were deliberately ignored or an official forgot to pass them to those administering the drugs — used to counter the effects of chemical and biological weapons.

An MoD report said the health department faxed it a warning from an animal testing laboratory urging further tests on the two-drug cocktail before it was given to humans. The report said the fax was overlooked "in the extremely busy period leading up to the Gulf conflict".

It said the fax was not logged for 10 days, was not marked by the official who received it for anyone else to consider, and a search of files found no copies of the fax.

No one at the MoD, other than the official to whom the fax was addressed, remembered discussing the matter with the laboratory. But scientists at the laboratory said they discussed their concerns with two or three MoD officials.

No MoD official has been disciplined over the affair. However, Dr Reid said a senior civil servant had been reprimanded, and two officers disciplined, for providing ministers with misleading information on the use of pesticides in the Gulf conflict.

The Royal British Legion welcomed the MoD's admissions. But Manchester solicitors Donns, acting for more than 1,300 veterans, said Dr Reid had demonstrated there had been negligence at the heart of government.

Urgent review of breast units

EVERY breast cancer screening unit in Britain has been ordered to review its service to restore public confidence, improve quality and eliminate organisational weaknesses, *writes Chris Mihill.*

The Health Secretary, Frank Dobson, this week announced an overhaul of screening programmes following recommendations by the Chief Medical Officer, Sir Kenneth Calman, who had investigated reports of failures in the breast cancer screening service at the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Trust.

All NHS trusts with breast cancer screening units have been told to report by the end of January on how they will deliver a "high quality service". They will be expected to agree "action plans" by the end of February to ensure national standards are being met. Responsibility for the quality of breast screening services will be taken away from trusts and restored to NHS regions, which will be able to close down units which fail to meet national standards.

Mr Dobson told MPs: "Women in east Devon have been put through worry, anguish and worse as a result of the failures of the screening service at the Royal Devon and Exeter."

An audit of 1,920 breast X-rays commissioned by the trust found that 229 women should have been called for further assessment.

In Brief

THE Government announced the end of exclusion orders and the power of internment, two of the most controversial measures brought in to combat the IRA.

A PIONEERING police scheme that dispenses "Maori justice" to teenage offenders is to go national after success in a test project. Teenage criminals are brought face to face with their victims to apologise and come to terms with the consequences of their crimes.

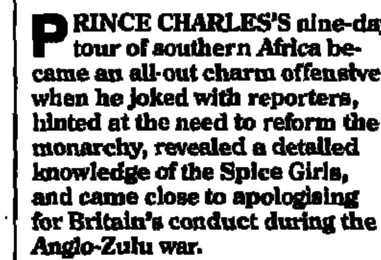
PSYCHOPATHIC patients at Ashworth top security hospital had such control over their unit that hardcore pornography was on sale and one man ran several businesses from his room, an inquiry heard. There were also allegations of child abuse on the premises.

LASER pointers, pen-sized gadgets that emit an intense pinpoint beam, were banned from sale after attacks on bus drivers, firefighters and footballers.

MAJOR Eric Joyce, the army officer who accused the armed forces of being steeped in social, sexual and racial prejudice, has been told he will not face the court martial he expected.

BRITISH ferry companies are facing a massive bill to fly home Czech and Slovakian refugees after they were refused permission to pass back through France. The companies are legally responsible for the repatriation of Gypsies who have withdrawn their asylum claims.

PRINCE CHARLES'S nine-day tour of southern Africa became an all-out charm offensive when he joked with reporters, hinted at the need to reform the monarchy, revealed a detailed knowledge of the Spice Girls, and came close to apologising for Britain's conduct during the Anglo-Zulu war.



SIX IRAQIS opposed to Saddam Hussein's regime were found guilty of hijacking a Sudan Airways Airbus and forcing it to land at Stansted airport. But the jury called for a degree of compassion given the background of the defendants, who had argued that they acted out of "necessity" as their lives were in danger.

KRISHNA Maharaj, a British businessman convicted of a double murder in the United States 10 years ago, was taken off Death Row and will be resentenced. His lawyers welcomed the move as a limited success — he had been hoping for a retrial.

CADBURY'S Swiss Chalet chocolate bar became the latest casualty in the long-running European chocolate war when a High Court judge ordered its withdrawal after complaints from a Swiss trade association.

Woman wins right to die with dignity

Clare Dyer

A TERMINALLY ill woman dropped her historic High Court battle for a ruling that her doctor could lawfully ease her death with drugs, after being assured that she could have her wish.

Annie Lindsell, aged 47, who has only weeks to live, sought a declaration that her doctor could administer drugs to prevent the mental or physical distress of the final stages of motor neurone disease. But she discontinued her battle after the judge and lawyers appointed by the Official Solicitor and the Attorney General agreed that no court ruling was needed.

The case hinged on the so-called doctrine of double effect, first expounded by Lord Devlin in the case of John Bodkin Adams, the doctor who in 1957 was charged with murder but acquitted after "easing the passing" of several patients.

This states that a doctor may give a patient doses of a pain-killing drug that shortens her life, so long as the intention is to relieve pain and suffering and not to kill. If the intention were euthanasia, the doctor could face a murder charge.

The doctrine was revisited three years ago by the House of Lords select committee on medical ethics, which stated that drugs could be given to relieve "pain and distress".

The question in Ms Lindsell's case was whether this covered the mental distress caused by inability to swallow and undergoing choking fits in the final stages of motor neurone disease. Ms Lindsell had seen the misery in which several friends with the disease ended their lives, and wanted to ensure a peaceful ending for herself, surrounded by her loved ones.

She sought a declaration that her doctor, Simon Holmes, could lawfully administer diamorphine when she reached the stage where attempts to swallow caused her to choke, causing her severe mental or physical distress, though not necessarily physical pain.

Ms Lindsell, a former flight attendant who was diagnosed with the muscle-destroying disease in 1992, is looked after 24 hours a day by her partner of 19 years, Ron Hicks, and a male friend. She was in court in a wheelchair to hear her counsel, Lord Lester QC, halt the action.

She said later: "All parties before the court, including the Attorney General, agreed that a doctor acting to relieve his patient's mental distress by administering palliative drugs, in the way proposed by [Dr Holmes] with my whole-hearted consent, would be acting lawfully even though this treatment will probably have the incidental effect of shortening a patient's life."

Lord Lester told Sir Stephen Brown, President of the Family Division, that all of the evidence before the court had established that the course of treatment proposed was in accordance with a "responsible body of good medical practice".

In the light of the evidence, Dr Holmes, who had wanted a declaration from the court that he could lawfully proceed, had now been advised he would give the proposed course of treatment when the time came".

Dr Holmes' advisers had been concerned because of cases in months ago in which doctors who said they had helped their patients die were interviewed by police.

Ms Lindsell, of Teddington, south-west London, nodded and mouthed "Thank you" after the judge said that he "thoroughly approved and endorsed" the discontinuance.

Sir Stephen said: "I very much hope that the doctors will feel perhaps that their attention has been focused on an important part of their practice and the law."

He hoped doctors would be reassured of the public's great confidence in them.

Doctors urge euthanasia for PVS victims

Chris Mihill

PATIENTS in a persistent vegetative state who are to be allowed to die should be given lethal injections and their organs taken for transplant, an international team of doctors and lawyers said last week.

The idea was criticised by the British Medical Association and condemned as repulsive and immoral by "pro-life" groups.

However, it was supported by the parents of Tony Bland, the Liverpool football fan who suffered an irreversible coma after the Hillsborough tragedy and was allowed to die after a long court battle.

The suggestion to harvest coma victims comes from a working party known as the International Forum for Transplant Ethics. It is headed by Sir Raymond Hoffenberg, former president of the Royal College of Physicians. Other British members include Ian Kennedy, professor of law and ethics at King's College, London, and Robert Sells, professor of transplant medicine at Liverpool University.

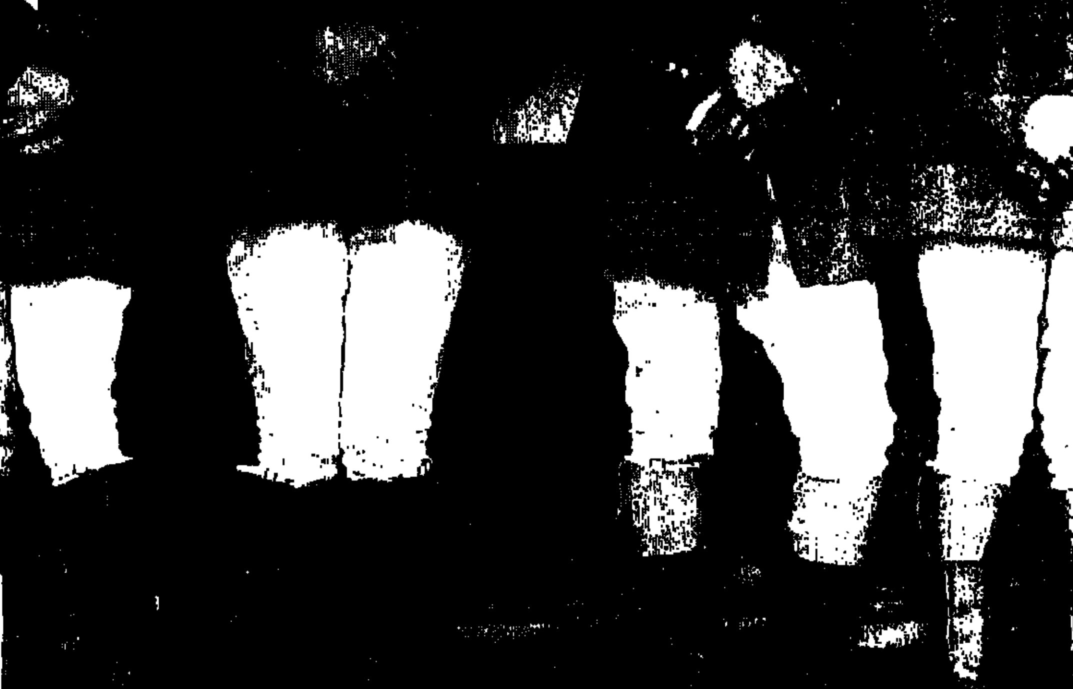
The working group says that once a decision has been made to withdraw treatment in persistent vegetative state (PVS) patients, and to allow them to die, thought should be given to saving the lives of people on transplant lists. Withdrawing food and water means death takes place over a 10-12 day period, and because of dehydration and other changes the organs become damaged and cannot be used for transplantation.

To allow them to be used, the person would have to be killed, probably with a lethal injection. However, this is at present against the law.

The doctors say administering a lethal drug would be more humane than a long-drawn-out death, and they can see no moral distinction between allowing someone to die by starvation and actively ending life.

Jack Scarisbrick, director of Life, described the proposal as morally unacceptable and a corruption of medicine. He said the condition of PVS was uncertain, and some patients had been known to recover.

Helen Watt, of the Linacre Centre, the Catholic medical ethics research unit, said: "It is a fairly repulsive suggestion. Seriously ill people should not be treated as organ banks. The end doesn't justify the means."



Those boots were made for riding . . . Hunters stand together in Worcester during a meeting to launch the final drive against a ban on fox hunting proposed by the local MP, Mike Foster. Mr Foster's bill is due to receive its second reading on November 28, but the Government has refused to allocate it more than the standard amount of parliamentary time for a private member's bill. It is therefore likely to fall prey to filibustering by pro-hunting MPs PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARGLES

'Joint guilt' law softened

THE 500-year-old law of "joint enterprise" — which led to a teenager being jailed for life for murdering a policeman though he was handcuffed and 100 yards away from the stabbing — was altered last week by five law lords, *writes Clare Dyer*.

The landmark ruling softens the much-criticised law, which previously said that if two or more people together took part in a criminal activity and one of them killed, the others would also be responsible.

In future, a secondary party will be guilty of murder only if he foresaw that the killer might have intended to kill or cause serious harm.

Phillip English's conviction for the murder of Sgt Bill Forth in Gateshead in March 1993 was this July overturned by the Court of Appeal after the law lords ruled that he should never have been convicted.

The police officer was stabbed by Paul Weddle, then aged 25, who was a friend of English. The 15-year-old insisted that he was unaware that Weddle had a knife. The prosecution accepted that this was possible.

Derek Bentley was executed in 1953 after being convicted of murder under the law of joint enterprise.

New measures to fight racism in police

Duncan Campbell

NEW tests for joining the police are to be introduced to try to increase the numbers of officers from ethnic minorities, the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, announced last week.

The move comes in response to a survey which shows that a "canteen culture" still exists in the service and that some middle-ranking officers are still reluctant to challenge racist "banter".

Many officers from ethnic minorities felt isolated within the police, the survey found. There was also a high level of "wastage" amongst them.

The survey, conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate into police community and race relations, concluded that although much had been achieved by the police in the last decade, some forces and officers were still failing to combat racism as effectively as they could.

"There was continuing evidence . . . of inappropriate language and behaviour by police officers, but even more worrying was the lack of intervention by sergeants and inspectors," concluded the survey.

It visited six forces: Avon and Somerset, Bedfordshire, Leicestershire, Merseyside, West Midlands and West Yorkshire.

"Potential supervisors demonstrated a reluctance to challenge colleagues who indulged in racist 'banter' and racist behaviour," the report added.

"Many ethnic minority officers felt unsupported by management and were left to rely on support from colleagues of a similar background."

The inspection, led by Inspector Dan Crompton, found that sergeants were the weakest link in the management of community and race relations.

They were the least likely to understand their responsibilities in this area.

Forces also failed to recognise the value of community beat officers, said the HMI report. It recommended that recruitment and promotion procedures should "test individuals' attitudes towards race and diversity".

Mr Straw announced that a revised recruitment test would be introduced in January. It would remove phrases or wording frequently found by ethnic minority candidates to be open to misunderstanding, a Home Office spokeswoman said.

There will also be a task force and a national conference in one year's time dealing with recruitment and retention of black and Asian officers.

Inspector Paul Wilson, chairman of the Black Police Association, said it welcomed the report but added: "Policy alone is ineffective. We need not only commitment from our leadership but also action."

David Blakey, president of the Association of Chief Police Officers and chief constable of West Mercia, said the issues raised were of the "utmost importance" to the police service.

There are 2,319 black and Asian officers, accounting for 1.82 per cent of the police service, compared with 6 per cent of the total population. In 1981, the figure was 339. There were 125 recruits in 1996/7, accounting for 2 per cent of the total recruits.

Police officers in Leicestershire and Merseyside have been required to leave the service recently, following racially offensive behaviour, the HMI report stated.

Detective Constable Wendy Richardson of Thames Valley police, who was awarded £9,000 in damages at an industrial tribunal after suffering racial abuse from another detective, said that she hoped that her success would "send a message" to other officers that they could bring such an action and succeed. She was referred to as a "nigger" and a "coon" while she was on a training course with an officer from another force.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
November 9 1997

Side-stepping Saddam's ploys

SEVERAL important points in the new crisis with Iraq have been clarified over the past few days: the problem is that they do not yet add up to a solution. First, there is a clear understanding on the Western side that this has to be resolved by diplomatic means: a delegation from the United Nations secretary-general, Kofi Annan, was on its way to Baghdad on Tuesday. Though the United States still reserves the right to take unilateral action, it has no appetite to do so. Second, Saddam Hussein himself has called for "dialogue to put things in order and on their right track". This sounds a bit more positive, even though he is a past master at procrastination. Third, although there are differences between UN Security Council members on how to deal with President Saddam, no one disputes that he is in violation of its resolutions and that the purpose of the UN delegation is not to force concessions but to secure compliance.

The fact that the Iraqi regime has not fully complied with UN resolutions calling for elimination of its weapons of mass destruction capacity needs to be underlined. There are certain issues where Iraq has been able to make some sort of case, but this is not one of them. The legality of the no-fly zones may be extremely dubious. The delay in reaching the oil-for-food arrangement last year was rightly criticised for punishing the innocent in Iraq most in need of food and medical relief. Threats to take unilateral military action against Baghdad are contrary to the spirit of collective decision-making under the Security Council. But Iraq's persistent twisting and turning to avoid full compliance with the UN Special Commission is a matter of record — much of it confirmed by Baghdad's own (belated) admissions. It took five years for Iraq to provide the Commission with what it stated to be a full, final and complete disclosure of its work in the chemical, biological and missile fields. Even now, work is continuing to update these disclosures. Baghdad denied having an offensive biological weapons programme until 1995, when it admitted having previously concealed important elements of such a programme. It is not necessary to believe the more lurid stories about what Baghdad allegedly still conceals: what has been discovered is bad enough.

It is true that other countries are not required to make any kind of disclosure — elsewhere in the Middle East, Israel is the glaring example. But President Saddam brought this on Iraq by his act of folly, and the clock cannot be turned back. It may be true that some of the relatively small number of Americans working with the Commission are intelligence agents: the "first-class professional support" that Bill Clinton says the US is providing could well include some real "professionals". If so, Washington would be well advised to replace them by non-intelligence experts. Britain should add its voice to ensure that unity is maintained within the Security Council: this will not be achieved either by brandishing weapons or compromising too far.

The curse of child labour

MANY CHILDREN help out in the shop or on the farm for a few hours every week with no ill effects. But the problem of child labour raised at the international conference in Oslo last week is of a totally different order. Unicef believes that more than a quarter of a billion children around the world between the ages of 5 and 14 are involved. Nearly half are working full-time, many are compelled to do dangerous or dirty work, and a majority are denied access to education. It is not much of an advertisement for a world that proclaims high ideals for the new millennium.

The grant to Save the Children announced last week by the UK's International Development Secretary, Clare Short, addresses a small part of the problem in one of its most extreme forms — bondage labour. The aim is to provide opportunities for up to 7,000 Pakistani children in the Punjabi town of Sialkot to shift away from their work sewing leather footballs destined for Britain. The International Federation of Football Associations (Fifa) has helped secure an agreement with world sporting industries to forgo supplies of footballs produced with child labour. Local schooling will be expanded to accommodate the children: efforts will be made to make up the shortfall in family incomes, partly by organising workshops where women can do the sewing instead. All of this underlines the point — stressed by Unicef's director, Carol Bellamy — that tackling child labour requires not only laws (which are often in place) but resources.

Unicef and the International Labour Organisation warn against oversimplified generalisations about child labour. There is a lack of reliable and comparable statistics, and those that are produced may exclude whole categories of working children in "traditional" sectors. It is not even clear whether the trend is upwards or down. There is some evidence of a decline in Asia as living standards rise, while numbers have increased in Africa under multiple social and economic pressures. Absolute numbers are rising because population is increasing.

Education emerges as the most important factor. Schooling has to be available at least at the primary level, with funding to compensate families that are dependent upon child income for allowing their children to attend. And education has to be free — many children work simply in order to support themselves or their siblings at school. Where the drop-out rate is low then the child labour rate is also low.

International trade is not the main factor behind child labour. Unicef estimates that less than 5 per cent around the world are engaged in export production. But successful action in this area could provide help to devise remedial models that can then be applied in the domestic sector. Child labour is found in developed countries too, particularly among immigrants, minorities and the new poor, and to no one's surprise is on the rise in central and eastern Europe. We have a special responsibility in tackling child labour in its most extreme forms. These include child prostitution, which is closely linked to the international tourist sex market, and the phenomenon of child soldiers in conflicts that the international community has failed to prevent. To regard the exploitation of the young in any form as a fact of life is simply unacceptable.

Tough justice in Massachusetts

THE reaction in Britain to Louise Woodward's murder conviction in a Massachusetts court suggests that her parents are not suffering alone. Woodward's friends in the town of Elton, Cheshire, have launched a campaign demanding justice for the 19-year-old, and phone-in shows were buzzing in agreement. Such an outburst of emotion is wholly understandable from Woodward's family and friends. But among those with no direct stake in the story of the au pair and the baby who died on her watch, cooler heads should prevail.

A useful start would be to drop the current presumption that British justice is inherently superior to any legal system abroad. Maybe British courts are preferable to those in Saudi Arabia, but Massachusetts is not in the Dark Ages. The United States is a society built on the rule of law, much of it drawn from Britain. Besides, a nation that has seen overturned convictions of the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four and Bridgwater Four is in no position to boast of unblemished superiority in the justice department. Nor is it right to say that Woodward was denied a fair trial. For three weeks her case was put by Barry Scheck, one of the most aggressive, highly rated defence lawyers in the US. The jurors clearly took their duty seriously; they weighed the evidence for a marathon 27 hours. When most observers thought Woodward would be acquitted, there was no talk of mistrial. It was the verdict they did not like, not the proceedings that led to it.

People have complained about trial by television. In fact, one of the few drawbacks of cameras in the courtroom is the tendency of TV viewers to believe they are as qualified to judge a case as the jury. Suddenly everyone is an expert, even when few outside the court heard every witness or saw every exhibit. The media circus may be annoying, but it is irrelevant: the jurors were quarantined away, unable to see the TV or read the papers. As for the coverage before the trial — of a type banned in Britain under ever-tighter contempt rules — most of it was tilted heavily in the au pair's favour.

Britons should pause for a moment and wonder how they might have felt if a British couple had lost their baby while in the hands of an American nanny. Would they have sided with the nanny against the couple, regardless of the evidence? Maybe not. The sorry tale of Louise Woodward is not an American atrocity, but a fair trial that ended in a verdict that may have gone wrong.

Australia, land of sun, surf – and loneliness

Will Hutton

IT IS A continent on the other side of the world where British and United States traditions easily commingle. Its cities boast the largest suburbs and its per capita incomes still place it in the first rank of nations. It is a generous and easy-going country, where beach life and surfing are integral to the way of life. But globalisation and free-market individualism have visited contemporary Australia — and the results are increasingly unhappy.

By the standards of economic rationalism — the phrase Australians use to describe neo-conservative Thatcherism — the country should be prospering. Inflation is eliminated, with price levels falling; taxation and public spending are low; welfare spending is aggressively means-tested; and the entire economy has been opened up to international competition, liberalisation and privatisation. Yet there is little sense of rising prosperity; rather there is growing anxiety about the country's economic and social future.

Talk to Labor politicians and there is the concern you might expect about employment, the hollowing out of the economy and growing inequality. But in social policy a new word is entering the vocabulary of preoccupations that is as unexpected as it is original. Australia is becoming a lonely society, they observe, especially in its sprawling suburbs. Loneliness is emerging as a hot political issue.

The heart of the problem, as seen by Lindsay Tanner — shadow federal transport minister and tipped as one of the restless Young Turks most likely to succeed to the Labor party leadership — is the way globalisation and market values have upset the fragile economic and social balance on which successful suburban life is built. When Australia was growing, its great coastal cities could spread effortlessly outwards, creating the famous individual quarter-acre "block" complete with a pavilioned bungalow in endless grids of streets. Large employers in city centres and factories in the outer suburbs underpinned employment, and underwrote community and social life.

But a number of savage trends have undermined this fragile social system. The decline in manufacturing employment is more accentuated in Australia, now representing less than 25 per cent of all employment — and even mining and agriculture employ little more than 5 per cent. This is a service economy where intellectual property is more important than large factories, and which has generated no net growth in full-time jobs for nearly a decade. There is the cohort of highly paid workers in the knowledge and information industries — but then there are myriad new, insecure and casualised forms of employment in everything from tourism to education.

But this kind of service-sector employment no longer underwrites suburban community. Instead of the systematic and regular patterns of social interaction that accompany regular paid employment and which are the foundations of community, interaction has become sporadic and intermittent. Worse, for those caught up in low-paid jobs accompanied by spells of unemployment, the new structures reinforce a downwards spiral not so much in poverty but solitude and desperation. In a market society, people take a more hard-headed approach to their relationships, trading them in when they consider them unsuccessful; women, for example, leave their unemployed or poorly paid husbands with rising aggression.

Thus one of the new phenomena in the suburbs is the marginalised, divorced middle-aged man, living alone, without the old structures that might have reintegrated him into society. There are few large-scale employers, and the old underpinnings of suburban life — the clubs and societies — have been eroded by the twin effects of erratic patterns of long working hours and the desocialising impact of television. Male suicide rates, except for New Zealand where the same process are more advanced, are the highest in the world and growing fast. Ten per cent of young Australians commit some form of self-harm. There is an upsurge of bullying, stealing and vandalism in schools. Whatever else, "economic rationalism" has not promoted much happiness.

THE trends undermining community and neighbourhood are pervasive. The search for public spending cuts, for example, has intensified the momentum to charge every user of every service its economic cost — from transport and, in Western Australia, even to some hitherto free beaches. Access to the public goods that lubricate suburban life has become progressively more expensive, bearing down hard on lower income groups. In short, the cumulative impact of globalisation in all its manifestations — from pressure for spending cuts to weakening organised labour — has been an upsurge in social marginalisation and sheer loneliness.

In Western Australia, the leader of the state's Labor party, Geoff Gallop, has made the loneliness and insecurity issue a central feature of his party's political positioning. In the state election last year, he tried to make the revival of the suburbs a major plank of policy, an initiative that helped him subsequently win the party leadership. Innovative ways of supporting sport, childcare and even encouraging research into local community history were all part of a package aimed at boosting people's sense of belonging and capacity to participate in suburban life.

However innovative such programmes, they are stillborn if the underlying economic trends carry on tearing away at the bonds of association and relationship. In response, Labor is moving leftwards at both national and state level, talking about a more active industrial policy, strengthening trade unions, and about the need to re-imagine the structures of Australian capitalism. As it does so, it has taken a lead in the polls for the first time since it lost the national election 18 months ago — with John Howard's federal government looking outdated, wedded to a policy programme that might have made sense in the 1980s but not today in a lonelier and more uncertain Australia. Australian politics are known to influence Britain's New Labour — so the message is clear. It should prepare to move to the left.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
November 9 1997

Le Monde

French oil firm plays down role in Africa

Dominique Gallois

ON OCTOBER 27 the French oil company Elf Aquitaine published a communiqué stating that its chairman, Philippe Jaffré, had gone to Congo-Brazzaville on October 26 and met the victor of the civil war, Denis Sassou-Nguesso. This was an effort to clear the air after conflicting rumours had been circulating in Paris for several days.

Some claimed the group's management team had flown secretly to Congo after the victory of Sassou-Nguesso's Cobra militia, while others were convinced the team was still in Paris monitoring operations by telephone on an hour-by-hour basis.

This was the second time in the past few months that Elf had to reveal its chairman's schedule in Africa. On June 12, it was forced to admit that he had met President Omar Bongo of Gabon and that they had become reconciled after several months of strained relations.

Elf is the biggest company in both Congo and Gabon. The purpose of such communiqués is to normalise, and even play down, relations between the French company and these countries' governments in order to counter repeated charges that Elf can make or break a regime in accordance with the French government's Africa policy.

Elf's privatisation in 1994 was presented as an opportunity to sever its connections with the French government. It wanted subsequently to appear like a normal oil company, comparable in its conduct to other leading groups in the sector, though still retaining great influence.

Above all, Elf wanted to duck charges from its competitors that it had colluded with the regimes of countries where it was well established.

But reputations and mindsets are not easily changed. "It's time you stopped behaving like French ambassadors and getting involved in domestic politics. Just act like industrialists," is the message that Jaffré hammers home to his expatriate staff.

His strategy is in line with the foreign policy now pursued by the French government, which intends to stop becoming involved in conflicts in Africa. But once those principles have been paraded, what actually happens may be somewhat different, as the group's new "Mr Africa", Jean-François Gavalda, told Le Monde in June.

"Contacts with heads of state depend on the size of the country," he said. "In Gabon, which has 1 million inhabitants, Bongo knows everyone. It's only normal he should meet the boss of Elf, the country's largest company. Things are different in Nigeria and Angola, because they are bigger countries. There we tend to deal more with oil ministers."

Caution is the watchword in the case of any conflict. "When you turn up in a family and two people are fighting among themselves, you mustn't get involved even if you have an opinion about the dispute. Your two friends could well gang up against you."

Elf says it adopted a strictly neutral stance during the civil war in Congo, a country of 2.6 million inhabitants and Africa's fourth-largest oil producer — after Nigeria, Angola and Gabon.

The group repeatedly denied rumours that it was supporting one side or the other, or that it later put its money on the future victor, Sassou-Nguesso. In June, the then president, Pascal Lissouba, in an interview with the French daily Libération, criticised Congo's biggest investor for having made no attempt to stabilise the country.

On October 29, he was more explicit in an interview with Le Figaro: "Sassou-Nguesso apparently promised Elf more advantageous financial terms, at a time when the company needed money to pay for expensive projects."

Sassou-Nguesso's return to power is clearly not something that Elf regrets. During his 13 years as president, from 1979-92, relations between the company and the Marxist-Leninist regime could not have been better. Elf controlled the county's oil industry, the only other group with a finger in the pie being Italy's Agip.



Cobra militiamen at a checkpoint in Brazzaville following victory last month in Congo's civil war PHOTOGRAPH JEAN-PHILIPPE KSIAZEK

Matters took a turn for the worse when Lissouba came to power, as Elf had supported his predecessor right to the end. Relations cooled when Congo's new president opened up the country's mining sector to the United States group, Occidental Petroleum.

Following that crisis, relations gradually returned to normal, and in the autumn of 1996 Lissouba even took the trouble to inaugurate the Nkossa oil rig. Elf continued to obtain mining permits, but had to resign itself to the arrival of other prospectors, such as the Anglo-Dutch Shell and the American Chevron and Exxon.

Back in power, Sassou-Nguesso faces a totally new ball game in the oil industry. Since the beginning of the 1990s, Africa has ceased to be the preserve of a handful of companies.

The Americans have left home base in search of new oilfields. To them the Gulf of Guinea is as promising as the Caspian Sea. All the major groups are present in the region. Japanese and Australian companies have followed in their wake.

Competition is tough. Every possible argument is used in an effort to get an exploration permit. In Angola, whenever oil concessions are auctioned off, Elf's competitors make a point of reminding the government that the French company long supported the Unita rebels.

At the same time, the volume of investment required to explore the sea floor means that companies are forced, paradoxically, both to compete and to co-operate with one another. They compete to become operators, and go into partnership to finance projects.

Every form of alliance is possible, and the oilfield map of the region shows a multitude of joint operations. To varying degrees in different countries, political influence is gradually being supplanted by new forms of competition such as technological expertise and financial clout. One of Elf's trump cards is the lead it has in its geological knowledge of the terrain. Its expertise will be a key factor in determining whether it will be able to maintain its strong position in the region.

(October 30)

'Cheap jobs' proliferate in Germany

Arnaud Leparmentier

THERE is a country in Europe where no basic minimum wage exists and where it is legally possible to work 15 hours a week for a maximum wage of $340 a month without paying any welfare contribution. No, the country where moonlighting is officially allowed is not Thatcher-blighted Britain but Germany, so often praised for its welfare system and high salaries.

According to the labour ministry, "ever since Bismarck, there has always existed a level below which it has not been necessary to pay pension, sickness or unemployment contributions".

With rising unemployment and prohibitively high contributions dragging down "normal" salaries, the number of such jobs, known as *billigjobs* (cheap jobs), shot up from 4.4 million in 1992 to 5.6 million in 1996. At the same time, the number of "normal" jobs went down.

Billigjobs are particularly advantageous for people who are otherwise covered by social security, such as wives, students looking for holiday jobs, and retired people, but also for the 1.5 million who have two jobs paying 610 deutschmarks ($340) a month at the same time. Such people are mainly employed by private individuals, but also on a part-time basis by retail outlets, cleaning firms and newspaper delivery services.

For the past few weeks, billigjobs have been roundly criticised by the left wing of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU). Norbert Blüm, the employment minister, says billigjobs distort competition between normal companies and those that "shirk the duty of solidarity". All sorts of ideas have been aired as to how to deal with the problem, among them the reintroduction of welfare contributions and a ban on all moonlighting.

Artisans, employers and the Liberal party (FDP) — chancellor Helmut Kohl's coalition partner — oppose the abolition of such jobs. Guido Westerwelle, the FDP's secretary general, says the root cause of the proliferation of billigjobs, Germany's "excessively high level of taxes and welfare contributions", must be eradicated.

Unlike France, Germany still thinks it faces a problem not of unskilled labour costs, but of labour costs in general. Champions of the social market-economy system continue to believe that, because of the German workforce's high level of skills, it is possible to offer everyone big salaries, even as they are being proved wrong by the craze for billigjobs and rising unemployment.

Wolfgang Schäuble, Kohl's preferred successor, has taken advantage of the controversy over billigjobs to improve his "leftwing" image and ingratiate himself with the opposition Social Democratic Party (SPD).

If at the 1998 elections no single party obtains a majority, a grand coalition would have to be formed between the CDU and the SPD. And even if the CDU performed best at the poll, Kohl would still step down, leaving his seat free for Schäuble.

(October 29)

Jospin's tough approach to law and order

EDITORIAL

IT LOOKS very much as if the prime minister, Lionel Jospin, is trying to impose on the French left a cultural revolution on the issue of law and order similar to the one Tony Blair engineered in Britain's Labour party.

The Labour slogan "Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime" appeals greatly to the French interior minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, who has long argued that a republic "carries rights with it . . . but also some small duties of which everyone should be reminded". The slogan was adopted by the French government at a symposium organised by Chevènement in the Paris suburb of Villepinte on October 24-25.

Coming after the announcement by the education minister, Claude Allègre, that he intended to reintroduce the teaching of "civic morals" in schools, Jospin's defence of "the right to security" was a second feather in Chevènement's cap.

It is no coincidence that Chevènement's line of argument has been rehabilitated by Jospin's government. Although the two men have their political differences, Jospin has always listened with interest to Chevènement's suggestions. It so happens that the interior minister's republican discourse suits the premier's "leftwing realism" down to the ground.

It is easy to see what has prompted the government's lurch towards more security-orientated policies. One of Jospin's priorities is to halt the process whereby large sections of the population, particularly the most underprivileged, feel they have been forgotten, if not abandoned, by the political community.

The situation on suburban housing estates is not unconnected with that feeling. Since Jospin has not, at an economic level, abandoned policies that Chevènement sees as having fuelled unemployment and thus worsened the situation in the suburbs, he can do no more than act whenever he has a chance to do so — on the one side with the Aubry job-creation scheme, and on the other with a hands-on policy to reduce insecurity and end the total breakdown of law and order in some areas.

Jospin can hardly be criticised for trying to convince millions of French that the state is at last going to look after them. But the left should beware of excessive zeal born of inexperience, which might prompt it to try to outdo the far right National Front. The previous government did precisely that — and suffered rather than benefited as a result.

It was surprising to hear Chevènement insist so unequivocally on a law-and-order stance, and relegate to second place the need for the police to obey a code of ethics. The new direction embarked on at the Villepinte symposium is bound to trigger much debate among the ruling Socialists. Leftwing elements within the judiciary and even the justice minister, Elisabeth Guigou, expressed reservations, particularly as regards Chevènement's recommended reform of legislation governing juvenile offenders.

But it is not enough to affirm the prerogatives of the state; the state itself also needs to be renovated and modernised. In that respect, the mountainous task of pushing through police reforms has not been completed.

(October 28)

Paris obeys Brussels and turns Loire green

Adrien Favreau

AFTER years of procrastination, France has finally decided to apply the European Union's environmental legislation to the estuary of the river Loire. With its 40,000 hectares of wetlands, the estuary is regarded by EU experts as an area that has considerable ecological interest beyond France's borders.

In September, the French government listed it as a special protection area (SPA) after Brussels, irritated by a 10-year delay, had threatened penalties. It means that, in accordance with the European directives on birds and habitat, no major developments may take place in a 18,700-hectare zone in the estuary.

The decision has delighted environmentalists but has upset those in favour of extending the port installations of Nantes and the neighbouring town of St-Nazaire.

"The estuary is not a green zone, but a strategic economic activity zone," says Alain Mustière, president of Nantes' chamber of commerce. The thorniest problem is the Donges-Est site, where there is already a scheme to fill in an area of 150 hectares of wetlands so that new docks can become operational by the time much of the neighbouring Montoir docks reaches saturation point in 2005.

"The Donges-Est development has been scheduled and must be carried through," says Luc Dejoie, the neo-Gaullist president of the Loire-Atlantique regional council. "On an issue as vital as this, a government should be able to decide what it wants to do in its own country." The mayors of St-Nazaire and Nantes have also come out in favour of developing Donges-Est.

The Socialist deputy for Loire-Atlantique, Claude Evin, toes the same line, pointing out that the project squares with existing government-driven regional development schemes. He says that France is merely required "to inform Brussels of its plans to receive an advisory opinion".

Environmental protection associations and Green party deputies and councillors interpret EU legislation differently. Mireille Ferri, a Green who sits on the Nantes municipal and regional councils, thinks that leading local politicians and estuary technicians have underestimated the powers of EU legislation.

"Before Donges-Est can be developed, Brussels' opinion will need to be heard," she says. "But the government will have to prove that it is a scheme of major interest, that there is no alternative solution, and that compensation for any prejudice suffered is provided."

Given the number of protected bird species found in the Loire estuary, the European Commission would not be allowed, under the terms of the directive on habitat, to take up the case itself if a development were to go ahead against its will. But a complaint by an association or by local elected representatives would enable it to refer the case to the European Court of Justice.

"Of course a complaint would be lodged if Donges-Est were developed," says Ferri. "And if France were condemned, EU aid to the estuary would be frozen."

(October 28)

Papon's career built on 'a pack of lies'

Jean-Luc Einaudi exposes the deceit of a man on trial for crimes against humanity

IT WAS in my capacity as author of La Bataille de Paris, 17 October 1961 (Seuil, 1991), that I was twice summoned as a witness at the current trial of Maurice Papon in Bordeaux. On the first occasion, on October 16, I recalled his action in Algeria in 1956-58, then his time as head of the Paris police. I was summoned a second time, on October 21, to be confronted with a defence witness, Roger Chaix.

Papon spoke after the confrontation. As the accused is always allowed the last word, I was unable on that occasion to answer a number of blatant lies he told with extraordinary aplomb.

I shall deliberately avoid discussing the most abominable of his lies — his claim, flying in the face of all the evidence, that on the night of October 17, 1961 [when some 200 Algerian demonstrators were killed by the Paris police], only three deaths resulted from the demonstration, and that the Algerians found dead in the river Seine had been killed by other Algerians who were settling scores.

Papon said he had not taken legal action against my book because he had not read it, and was therefore unaware of its contents. He added that he now regretted not having sued. But in October 1991, a month after the book came out, Jean-Pierre Elkabbach interviewed Papon on television and, at one point, disagreeing with his version of the facts, said: "In Jean-Luc Einaudi's very interesting book ... there are both documents and an hour-by-hour description of what was going on in Paris."

Papon retorted: "Yes, but there's another very interesting book." And he proffered his own book, Les Chevaux du Pouvoir. At the end of the programme Elkabbach said to Papon: "I'll give you Einaudi's book in case you haven't read it yet." Papon replied: "I have it."

He had known my book and its contents for six years. If he did not take legal action ... it was simply because he feared the consequences of a court case where witnesses, victims, former policemen, former soldiers and commentators would have taken the stand and described what really happened on October 17, 1961.

Police arrest Algerians in Puteaux, west of Paris, in October 1961. Up to 200 Algerian demonstrators were killed while Papon was Paris police chief in 1961. The official figure was three deaths

In giving evidence, I reminded the court that at a Paris city council meeting of October 27, 1961, Papon failed to answer some very specific questions posed by Claude Bourdet.

They included: "Is it true that a great number of wounded and dead were hit by bullets of the same calibre, made by a leading manufacturer that supplies the police with ammunition? That a large number of those bullets were fired at point-blank range? Is it true that some 50 demonstrators apparently arrested in the Boulevard St-Michel area died at police headquarters? Is it true that many bodies were fished out of the Seine? In press circles ... there has been talk of 150 bodies being fished out of the water between Paris and Rouen. Is that true?"

In the course of his long speech before the Bordeaux court, Papon brandished a text which he said was a last-minute piece of evidence. And he claimed that, contrary to what I had said, he had proof that he had answered Bourdet's questions. But the document was in fact no more than the text of his own speech before the Paris city council on October 27, 1961, which contained no answer to Bourdet's questions. What he did say then was: "The Paris police simply did what it had to do."

Earlier, Papon had already tried to pull the wool over the court's eyes by stating, through his lawyer, that he had taken action against Bourdet for his remarks and won his case. While it is true that he took action against Bourdet, it was not over his accusatory questions, but over his remark that "from 1956 to 1958 in Constantine he was one of the most ferocious architects of repression". The case against Bourdet, sued for "insulting a civil servant", was dismissed in February 1964.

Papon claims that a former leader of the French federation of the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN), Ali Haroun, paid tribute to him in a book — a fact that would have given him the image of a respected enemy and certainly not someone capable of giving orders to murderers of Algerians. The book, La 7ème Wilaya, came out in 1986. It contains no such tribute. On the contrary, it is a scathing indictment of crimes for which Haroun holds Papon responsible.

When he referred to the number of victims on October 17, 1961, Papon persisted in sticking to the figure of three, as he had 36 years earlier. One of them, he said, was a Frenchman, whose heart gave out under the shock and whose post-mortem revealed him to be suffering from a heart complaint.

The brief extract from the Paris public prosecutor's archives published by the daily Libération last week confirms that the man concerned, Guy Chevalier, died as a result not of a heart attack but of voluntary manslaughter.

These are just some of the cases where Papon has been caught lying blatantly, putting forward his version of the facts with great self-assurance, as though it were the gospel truth.

I recoil with horror as I think of all those years when a much younger Papon held a position of great responsibility that relied heavily on lies. I recall the remark he made at Montrouge police station on October 2, 1961: "When you tell headquarters that a North African has been shot dead, the superintendent who visits the scene must take steps to ensure that the North African was carrying a gun." That is what Papon used to describe as "subversive warfare".

(October 25)

Wolves stir up a row in the Alps

Philippe Révil

ARE wolves recolonising the northern French Alps? Rumours of this have grown over the past few months in the *départements* of the Hautes-Alpes and Savoie, and in the Queyras region, where several hunters claim to have spotted wolves recently.

Sheep farmers have been the first to cry wolf. As their summer season in the mountains came to an end, they decided to try to cut their losses by sleeping near their flocks, which roam the high pastures around Mont Cenis.

"I've been sounding the alarm for three years," says Jean Blanc, a farmers' leader in the Haute-Maurienne area and president of the Bonneval-sur-Arc hunting association.

Savoyard sheep farmers estimate that 150 sheep, ewes and goats have been killed or have disappeared in the past few months. But the local authorities claim the death toll is much lower: they say 17 animals have been attacked by either stray dogs or wolves.

The presence of wolves has not been confirmed by local nature wardens. "It's probable but not certain," says Cyrille Van Effenterre, director of agriculture and forests in Savoie. "We have found traces of a large member of the *Canidae* family, which could be a wolf. We're currently analysing pawprints and sheep carcasses."

However, the local authorities argue that even if there is no confirmation in the near future of the presence of wolves, the animals will turn up eventually, and local inhabitants should be prepared. The number of wolves, which are protected by the 1979 Berne Convention, is growing in western Europe. There are thought to be 450 in Italy and 2,500 in Spain and Portugal.

The animals can travel great distances and are not held up by such natural barriers as the Alps or the Pyrenees. There has been considerable controversy over the presence of wolves in the Parc National du Mercantour, in the mountains above Nice, where several wolf cubs have been born. Once they are weaned, young males are chased off by the dominant male of the pack and have to find new territory.

But while humans are afraid of wolves, wolves are much more afraid of human beings. The animals are extremely wary but are easily attracted by sheep, a favourite prey.

"They're allowing wolves to get established on our land, whereas our grandparents managed to get rid of them," says one angry sheep farmer.

"There are no plans to reintroduce this predator," says Emmanuel de Guillebon, director of the Parc de la Vanoise in Savoie, and president of the association of national park directors. Although he admits that wolves wreak havoc among untended flocks of sheep, he thinks that they are, above all, "a fertile source of fantasies".

(October 25)

Le Monde
Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani

Jiang Admits Possible Tiananmen Errors

John Pomfret and Lena H. Sun in Cambridge, Massachusetts

CHINESE President Jiang Zemin for the first time in public used the words "mistakes" and "shortcomings" in response to a question at Harvard last weekend about the 1989 crackdown on student-led protests around Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

The 71-year-old leader did not repudiate the suppression of the demonstrations against corruption and one party rule, and used the terms in an oblique reference to Tiananmen. But his remarks after a speech at Harvard University marked the second time during a weeklong tour of the United States that Jiang has surprised China watchers by departing from a formulaic justification of his country's limits on human rights and political dissent.

"It goes without saying that naturally we may have shortcomings and even make some mistakes in our work, however we've been working on a constant basis to improve our work," Jiang said, answering a question about why the Communist Party had chosen confrontation over dialogue in dealing with Chinese students in 1989.

The suppression of the student sit-in on Tiananmen Square left hundreds dead and hundreds more either jailed or exiled. The crackdown badly damaged U.S.-China relations and, more than eight years later, cast a shadow over last week's U.S.-China summit, the first since 1989 and designed by both governments as an opportunity to outline common interests and areas of cooperation.

Jiang's appearance at Harvard was met by the largest, loudest, and most emotional protest of his U.S. visit. As drizzle turned into a chilling rain, a throng of activists chanting slogans for freedom and democracy in China and Tibet and "Shame on Harvard" overwhelmed a competing group of Chinese student organizations who waved Chinese and American flags to welcome the Chinese leader.

Police hold back Tibetan protesters outside a New York hotel where President Jiang was meeting US business leaders PHOTO: MIKE SEGAR

Although protests have shadowed Jiang at every stop, he had been well shielded from demonstrators before last Saturday. As his motorcade of black limousines arrived outside Memorial Hall on the Harvard campus, Jiang came within a few yards of several hundred demonstrators. He was confronted by huge white and black "Free Tibet" banners and Chinese dissidents bellowing in Mandarin over loudspeakers, "Down with Jiang Zemin," "Down with One Party Dictatorship," and "Jiang Zemin Go Home!" One protester set a small Chinese flag alight.

Throughout his 45-minute speech the muffled yells of protesters outside filtered into Sanders Theater, which is part of Memorial Hall.

Jiang's statements about Tiananmen probably do not presage an immediate change of policy, as the Chinese government has moved in recent years to silence political dissent even as it embraces more open markets. In Beijing, reports earlier this year that some Communist Party officials were pushing for a reevaluation of the Tiananmen Square crackdown have not yielded a change in the government's position which has termed the demonstrations a "counter-revolutionary rebellion" and has denied that they were motivated by patriotism.

In a press conference last week in Washington with President Clinton, Jiang called the Tiananmen demonstrations "political disturbances" and defended the violence against demonstrators as "necessary measures according to the law."

Still, Merle Goldman, a professor of Chinese history at Boston University, said she found Jiang's use of the two words — mistakes and shortcomings — unprecedented. "The very fact that he admitted there were problems in the broader context was very unusual," she said.

The remarks last Saturday marked the second time on this trip that Jiang appears to have broached publicly subjects that Chinese leaders have considered taboo. On Thursday last week, for example, in a speech in Washington, Jiang predictably defended China's policy in Tibet, saying people in that troubled part of China are living "in happiness and contentment."

But Jiang also said: "We believe that without democracy, there can be no modernization." The statement was remarkable, Goldman and other China watchers have noted, because it was an echo of assertions made by China's most famous dissident, Wei Jingsheng, who was jailed in 1979 for uttering the same thing. Wei has spent all but six months of the last 18 years in jail.

Steven Mufson in Beijing adds: China quietly has released updated information on eight political prisoners in response to a campaign by an American business consultant, John Kamm, to obtain details about their sentences, alleged crimes, current health and prison status from China's secretive jail system.

Three of the eight have had their sentences slightly reduced; one was released in June.

U.S. Seeks $1bn to Clear Land Mines

Bradley Graham

THE United States announced plans last week to try to boost international spending on efforts to remove land mines by more than 500 percent over the coming decade — to $1 billion a year — and clear the world of all mines that threaten civilian populations by 2010.

The unilateral initiative is an attempt by the Clinton administration to reassert a leading role in anti-mine activities after its controversial decision in September not to join scores of other nations in an agreement to ban land mines. Anti-mine activists welcomed the move, but cautioned that added money alone would not ensure faster progress in the task of locating and removing an estimated 100 million mines in more than 60 countries.

Outlining the plan at a news conference, Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright said the United States intended to double its own spending on mine-clearing — to $77 million next year — and would persuade foreign governments, international financial organizations and other public and private sources to reach the new program's ambitious goal. To this end, the Clinton administration intends to host a donors' conference in Washington next year.

While the focus of a growing international anti-mine movement has been on banning such weapons altogether, Albright suggested the emphasis should be on eliminating mines already in place, many of them left over from long-ago conflicts in poor countries.

"This call for a concerted effort by the international community is based on the premise that the best way to protect civilians from land mines is to pull mines from the soil like the noxious weeds that they are," she said.

Much of the existing international mine-clearing effort has remained loosely coordinated at best, and, as Albright noted, "the most common tool we have for detecting land mines is still a stick attached to a person's arm."

But administration officials involved in drafting the initiative acknowledged that it was developed quickly over the past few weeks, with many details still to come. They could offer no specific projections about U.S. spending on mine-clearing beyond the fiscal year 1998 and said discussions with other potential key donor nations were just beginning.

Asked how the $1 billion target was chosen, Karl F. Inderfurth, the State Department official named to coordinate the initiative, suggested it was more an attention-getting device than any firm calculation of the true cost of clearing the world of mines.

Hussein Says Netanyahu Betrayed Trust

John Lancaster in Amman

KING Hussein of Jordan, infuriated by the recent Israeli attempt to kill a political leader of the militant Islamic group Hamas here, says that his trust in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has all but evaporated and that only a much more vigorous diplomatic effort by the United States can prevent the collapse of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

In an interview last week, the Jordanian monarch accused Netanyahu of repeatedly betraying him, most recently and most audaciously by dispatching Mossad secret service assassins on a botched mission to poison a Hamas politburo member, Khaled Mehal, in Amman in September.

Hussein also faulted the United States for the deterioration in Arab-Israeli relations, urging Washington to play a much more active role in pressing Israel to abandon policies — such as building settlements in the West Bank — that he says are pushing the region toward an "explosion."

"The United States, with its tremendous influence and impact on this area and all the people of the region, and its position in the world, should move from being a messenger to being actively involved," Hussein said in the interview at Basman Palace, overlooking the capital. "It just cannot carry on continuing to deliver messages from one side to another."

The comments by Hussein, one of Washington's closest Arab allies, constitute a challenge to Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, who said during a tour of the region in September that she will not return until Israel and the Palestinians demonstrate a greater commitment to peace. They also reflect his sense of betrayal: Alone among Arab leaders, and despite intense political opposition at home, Hussein has pursued normal, friendly relations with Israel, with which Jordan made peace in 1994.

In somber and at times despairing tones, Hussein, 61, said he has virtually run out of ideas on how to deal with the right-wing Israeli leader. He accused Netanyahu of repeatedly breaching commitments to his Arab negotiating partners and pandering to extremist elements in Israel's body politic. Far from enhancing Israel's security, he said, such tactics are fanning the flames of Arab radicalism and could lead to a new "balance of fear" between Israel and hostile neighbors armed with weapons of mass destruction.

"It was an act against Jordan itself, its integrity and its sovereignty, and the results were devastating to the trust we had built so far," Hussein said of the September 25 assassination attempt on Meshal, a Jordanian citizen.

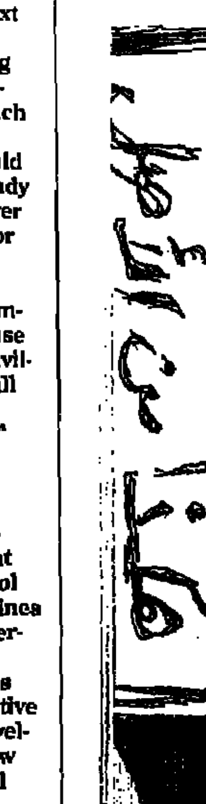
Hussein cautioned that he is not abandoning Jordan's policy of "normalization" with Israel. The two countries are continuing discussions on issues such as water rights, tourism and trade. The desert kingdom of nearly 4.5 million people, more than half of them Palestinian, is one of the few Arab states that has committed publicly to sending delegates to a U.S.-sponsored economic conference in the Persian Gulf state of Qatar next month. Israel also will attend.

"If we cannot in certain areas see any real tangible progress it doesn't mean that we close the doors and go back to square one," he said.

But Hussein also made clear that he is increasingly inclined to draw a distinction between Netanyahu and the Israeli people, a majority of whom he still believes are committed to making peace with the Arabs. "It is a very fair distinction, and it's a very serious distinction in my mind," Hussein said.

Hussein confirmed reports that only two days before the attempt on Meshal's life, he had relayed a message to Israel on behalf of Hamas leaders broaching the possibility of a 10-year moratorium on violence. Netanyahu has defended the attack on Meshal on grounds that Hamas was behind recent suicide bombings in Jerusalem.

Hussein said the episode has left him at a loss about how to proceed in his relationship with Netanyahu. "In the past I had a partner," he said in reference to Rabin, who was assassinated two years ago and with whom he was particularly close. "But now I don't know where we are."



Sever Criminal Links, Japan Bosses Told

Sandra Sugawara in Tokyo

AN EXTRAORDINARY meeting was due to take place this week at the Tokyo headquarters of the Keidanren, the voice of Big Business in Japan. Hundreds of captains of industry were planning to gather in a large conference room on the 12th floor to hear Shoichiro Toyoda, the 72-year-old chairman of Toyota Motor Corp., ask them to cut their ties to the Japanese underworld once and for all.

The message from Toyoda, who heads the Keidanren, is in part an appeal to self-interest. The gathering has been called as Japanese prosecutors are intensifying an assault against the many corporations that pay off extortionists known as *sokaiya*.

The list of companies already caught in the investigation reads like a Who's Who of corporate Japan. This year, authorities have arrested senior-level executives at Mitsubishi Motor Corp., Matsuzakaya department store, Nomura Securities, Nikko Securities Co., Yamaichi Securities Co., Daiwa Securities Co., Dai-Ichi Kangyo Bank Ltd. and the Ajinomoto food product company.

Numerous other corporations are under investigation, according to media reports, including Mitsubishi Electric Corp., Toshiba Corp., Hitachi Ltd., and Asahi Bank.

Japan has a reputation as the world's premier low-crime society. But in many communities, organized criminals operate. Gangsters run prostitution, drug and protection rackets. They act as for-hire debt collectors. Many Japanese see them as part of the neighborhood, a group that has always been there and always will be.

The criminals who target the corporate world take advantage of Japanese society's dictum to preserve order at all costs. Typically, they threaten to disclose unflattering information about a company at a shareholders' meeting or in a newsletter, or even on the Internet. For years, companies have treated payments to buy silence as a routine cost of doing business.

But a bigger embarrassment than questions at a shareholder meeting is footage on the evening news of authorities raiding a corporate headquarters.

"Many top executives are at a loss," said Hideaki Kubori, a Tokyo attorney who specializes in fighting sokaiya. "The investigations are spreading quickly to different industries and the management doesn't understand what it means."

Some executives, however, have decided it means they have to make a clean break. About 1,200 Japanese companies have so far declared that they have severed ties with sokaiya, Tokyo police announced last month.

Kubori said the government has made previous attempts to rid the corporate world of sokaiya, but that this time it is different. He said an aggressive group of prosecutors has taken charge of the investigations since the arrest in May of a sokaiya with alleged ties to Nomura Securities.

"They thought it was not good for Japanese capitalism that the core of its business practices is corrupted by sokaiya," Kubori said.

Many government officials, including Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, realize that this type of corruption must be wiped out if Japan's economy is truly to open to the world, said one Japanese analyst. Patterns of hidden extortion payments prevent the kind of truthful financial disclosure that global investors increasingly demand in markets where they put their money.

Because such payments are illegal — both for companies and the mobsters — the payments are often disguised. For instance, police allege that Mitsubishi Motor and other companies paid more than $75,000 to a company run by a sokaiya's wife, supposedly for the use of a beach house.

With the public subjected to a steady stream of news stories about investigations and raids at some of Japan's best known and respected companies, the government has been pushed to act as well. The cabinet recently endorsed and forwarded to the Diet proposals to strengthen punishment for these kinds of crimes.

A Man With Madness in His Method

OPINION
Richard Cohen

THE MAYOR of New York is a touch mad. He is a bundle of petulance and grievances, a workaholic who, like the city itself, seems never to sleep. New Yorkers can go to bed assured that Rudolph Giuliani will not. He is out there, in Gotham, chasing down the bad guys — and they include, of course, his political foes.

One of them is his Democratic opponent, Ruth Messinger. She trails Giuliani in every published poll and, most important, in the conversations of every New Yorker I know. Her voters must live in some other city.

And yet when Messinger stated a fact about the mayor's re-election campaign — that it has had to return an astounding amount of money collected illegally — Giuliani turned on her with such ferocity that traffic stopped all over the city, birds dropped from the sky and peacekeepers were alerted at the nearby United Nations.

For merely raising the financing issue, Giuliani virtually accused Messinger of being anti-Italian — this because she had not marched the entire route of the Columbus Day parade. Not only that, Giuliani added, she had also skipped a Columbus Day mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral, making her by implication (1) anti-Italian, (2) anti-Catholic and, because the late Mr. Columbus had discovered America, (3) anti-American as well.

A day later, Giuliani apologized.

Over the summer came another incident. Giuliani refused to give the keynote speech for the opening of the new Arthur Ashe Stadium for tennis. Not only that, he wouldn't go near the place. This was because the previous mayor, David Dinkins, had agreed to give the U.S. Tennis Association $325,000 every time a plane flew over the prestigious U.S. Open. As a result, the planes are rerouted — over vast neighborhoods of people who, as luck would have it, don't play tennis but do vote. This was good politics on Giuliani's part but it was not why he did it. He did it because that's who he is.

Now, I use the word "mad" a bit expansively and with the pundit's version of poetic license. Still, there is nary a person in this very tough and totally jaded town who would enjoy a predawn stroll through the mayor's psyche. It is a dark repository, I would guess, of mortal enemies and passionate grievances. These include certain special interests, the criminal class and — at the moment — anyone who questions the unquestionable purity of the mayor and his methods. These people should — at the least — be exiled to "Joisey."

It is this quality — a Vesuvian temperament and a hot hate for the bad guys — that has served Giuliani better than any single government program, no matter how needed. Everything about him strongly suggests that he is not in politics for any specific program, or any ideological reason, but because he sees it as the secular equivalent of the priesthood which once so attracted him. He is, as any New Yorker can tell you, engaged in a fight against evil itself.

So far, the mayor has banished the pesky and, sometimes, menacing squeegee men from the streets. He has also taken on the mob, tossing it out of the Fulton Fish Market and even from Little Italy's San Gennaro Festival. As for crime in general, he has loosed the fateful lightning of the NYPD on punks large and small, concentrating on the little stuff before it could become the big stuff.

The results have been virtually miraculous. It's the 1950s and '60s all over again — but with cable TV, yet. Murder has fallen 56 percent since 1990, its peak year, and this year could be even better than last. It's true, of course, that crime has fallen almost everywhere, but nowhere as starkly as in New York City.

No doubt a price has been paid. Here and there a complaint is heard that the police are less civil than they once were, that they are more willing to stop a person based on race or age. But even when a Haitian immigrant was allegedly — and unspeakably — tortured in a Brooklyn police station, no one yelled for Giuliani's head. Much of New York seemed to think it was better to have a few innocent victims of the police than many innocent victims of crime.

It happens that crime began decreasing under Dinkins. Yet it was Giuliani, much more than Dinkins or the hapless Messinger, who personifies what New York in general feels — a rage at the way things used to be and a determination that, almost no matter what, the streets remain safe. Once it seemed a mad notion — which is why, no doubt, New Yorkers sent for Giuliani. He has a quality they seek.

The legendary popularity of Rudy Giuliani, the man who cleaned up the capital of crime, should guarantee his re-election on Tuesday as mayor of New York PHOTOGRAPH: REX

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
November 9 1997

Christians Failed Jews, Pope Says

Lee Hockstader in Rome

POPE John Paul II last week condemned the actions of many Christians before and during the Holocaust, telling a Vatican conference that the Christian world contributed to the rise of anti-Semitism and then failed to fight it as Jews were being slaughtered during World War II.

But while the pope's statement was his strongest on the subject to date, he stopped short of issuing an apology for alleged actions or inactions of the church or those of his controversial wartime predecessor, Pope Pius XII. Some Jewish groups have demanded an apology and criticized the Vatican for failing to come to terms fully with its role.

"In the Christian world — I am not saying on the part of the church as such — the wrong and unjust interpretations of the New Testament relating to the Jewish people and their supposed guilt [in Christ's death] circulated for too long, engendering sentiments of hostility toward this people," said the 77-year-old pontiff.

"This contributed to a lulling of consciences, so that when Europe was engulfed by a wave of persecutions inspired by a pagan anti-Semitism . . . the spiritual resistance of many was not what humanity had a right to expect from the disciples of Christ."

The remarks by the pope, delivered in French at a Vatican symposium on the roots of anti-Semitism in Christian teachings since the time of Christ, were blunt by the Vatican's standards. Until the 1960s, the idea of Jewish guilt for the death of Christ was accepted by the church. Although that concept has since been repudiated, it wasn't until today that the Vatican has specifically associated it with the rise of Hitler.

"This is probably the [pope's] clearest acknowledgment of the role of bad Christian teachings . . . in paving the way for the success of the Nazis and anti-Semitism," said Eugene Fisher, an ecumenical specialist of the U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington.

But to some Jewish organizations, the pontiff's comments, while welcome, did not go far enough. They criticized the pope for failing to lay out fully the Vatican's World War II shortcomings, reviving a post-war historical debate that has never really been resolved. The Vatican remained neutral during the conflict.

"The statement is a breath of fresh air in what has been . . . a dismal record of the church's failure to say these things openly and honestly," said Rabbi Marvin Hier, founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. He added, however, that a papal apology would be useful as "a lesson to future generations that the church got the message and it will never happen again — that everyone has to assume responsibility and no one is above the spiritual or legal law."

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
November 9 1997

Open and Shut Case On Foreign Funds

Kenneth J. Cooper in New Delhi

WHEN MEDIA baron Rupert Murdoch beamed the first private television shows into India in 1991, breaking a government monopoly on the small screen, foreign ownership of satellite TV networks was unrestricted. Murdoch led a boom in the broadcasting market and now owns an interest in six channels available in India.

But a new coalition government is moving to cap ownership by the brash Australian American and other foreign broadcasters. Last year, a draft of comprehensive broadcasting legislation set a limit on the share of channels that can be foreign-owned at 25 percent; the proposed limit has since been raised to 49 percent. Some lawmakers across the political spectrum have pushed for a complete ban.

India has made a similar reversal on civil aviation. Following a 1993 court decision overturning the 40-year monopoly of the state-owned domestic airline, the government let two Persian Gulf airlines own a combined 40 percent stake in what has become the nation's most successful private carrier.

But under a new policy adopted this year, Kuwait Airlines and Gulf Air will have to divest their holdings in Jet Airways, and Singapore Airlines will not be permitted to join India's oldest and largest industrial conglomerate in financing a new airline. The current policy of Prime Minister I.K. Gujral's Cabinet does allow foreign investors to own as much as 40 percent of a domestic carrier — as long as those investors are not other airlines.

In the six years since India officially abandoned a socialist path and opened its door wider to private capital from abroad, that door has creaked back and forth in the political gusts blowing here in the capital, producing inconsistent policies that have bewildered prospective investors from India and abroad. Judging from emotional parliamentary debates on foreign investment, during which distressed critics have warned that an influx of international capital will put India's sovereignty and security at risk, a million anxieties have gripped this nation of 950 million and stalled economic change.

The amount of direct investment that has stirred those fears is relatively low. In each of the last six years, less than $2.5 billion from abroad has flowed into a $1 trillion economy. Still, xenophobia has been directed at multinational companies, primarily ones based in the United States, India's biggest trading partner and largest foreign investor.

"Slowly, you are giving away everything to the multinational companies," Chandra Shekhar, a former prime minister, warned Parliament in August. "The way the [financial] capital of the country has been sold to foreigners, the way they have captured our industry is enough to hang our heads in shame . . . The country is compromising its sovereignty."

What is it that has bred so much insecurity here — a developing nation of immense proportions, one with extensive natural resources, more skilled technicians than any country except the United States, the capacity to make nuclear weapons and one of the world's largest armies?

In the opinion of the two finance ministers who have guided the economic changes, India remains haunted by the British East India Company. There is a recurrent nightmare that wily foreigners will come here under the guise of commerce but take control as exploitive rulers — just as the British did when they came to trade in 1609 but did not leave until 1947. Many older Indians also have difficulty breaking a habit of mind formed during decades of Soviet-style central planning — the idea that terrible disruptions will occur if government does not control every aspect of the economy.

"These are all imaginary fears, a byproduct of the old command type of economy, the Soviet type of thinking," Manmohan Singh said last year just before leaving the finance minister's post. "But I think over a period of time, as our people get more self-confidence, this fear will disappear."

Gujral, as foreign minister last year, urged formulation of an economic strategy suited to India's circumstances, just as neighboring China made its way into the global market with its own brand of capitalism. But since becoming prime minister in April, Gujral has not outlined a distinctive Indian strategy.

Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, asked to describe the government's strategy for attracting and deploying foreign investment, responded instead with a lengthy recitation of bureaucratic procedures for reviewing such proposals, giving the impression that parliamentary ambushes have put him on the defensive. "There are enough checks and balances to ensure that foreign investment does not affect India's national interests and is channelized into core areas of the economy," said Chidambaram, a self-styled reformer who graduated from Harvard Business School.

IN AUGUST, when support for legislation to enable private insurers to compete with government companies collapsed before a scheduled vote in Parliament, Gujral angrily withdrew the proposal. Critics had called for an amendment to bar foreign insurers from India — even though its nationalized companies do business in several other countries. Pramod Mahajan, a senior leader of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), said he opposes the entry of foreign insurers because it would put Indian capital — the premiums collected — "into foreign hands."

But an American analyst said the government could require that a share of premiums be invested in India. "It's a game you could play to your advantage," the analyst said.

India was thought to have reached a political consensus in favor of foreign investment except in consumer goods, but that consensus has apparently broken down since the defeat of the Congress party government of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao last year. It was Rao, confronted with a shortage of foreign currency to pay for essential imports in 1991, who opened the economy wider to trade and foreign investment. Since then, many American companies have shown interest in selling their products to India's middle class of 250 million.

But disagreements about foreign investment have emerged among partners in the 13-party coalition that formed the last two governments. The coalition's shakiness has also created opportunities for other parties to score political points by appealing to nationalistic sentiments. At times, this approach has been taken by both the BJP, the main opposition party, and the Congress party, which helped vote Gujral to power and, before him, H.D. Deve Gowda.

The voices of anxiety roared during Parliament's recent debate on the state of the nation after a half-century of independence.

Sushma Swaraj, a BJP leader, accused foreign companies of spoiling the nation's youth with high paying jobs, luring them away from careers in the military, medicine and engineering. "This is bad for the country," she said.

Ashok Mitra, a Communist, opposed "infiltration" of foreign companies into India's banking sector and accused reformers such as Singh and Chidambaram of "yearning to return to the non-freedom we had 50 years ago."

With few exceptions, since 1955 India has prohibited foreign companies from owning an interest in periodicals published in the country. "On one hand, they say no to foreign media in print. On the other hand, they allow foreign media to invest in electronic media here," complained Aveek Sarcar, a Calcutta publisher.

V.N. Gadgil, a former information and broadcasting minister, would make the government's media policy more consistent by also banning foreign ownership of TV channels, which he accused of alienating young Indians from their cultural roots. "All they do is watch MTV [and buy] jeans, Coca-Cola, hamburgers," he said.



The wheel thing: many Indians are wary about the influence of investment from abroad PHOTO DON McPHEE

Borderline Cases

Annie Proulx

THE CRYSTAL FRONTIER
By Carlos Fuentes
Translated from the Spanish by
Alfred MacAdam
Farrar Straus Giroux. 266pp. $23.

THE CRYSTAL FRONTIER emerges from nine stories as a loosely structured political novel concerned with the uneven and painful meshing of two North American cultures which catch at each other like warped gears forced to engage solely by the circumstance of inescapable physical contact. The crystal frontier is "the illusory crystal divider, the glass membrane between Mexico and the United States." Carlos Fuentes has intimate knowledge of both countries and has built an international literary reputation on that knowledge and his compassionate championship of the poor and oppressed. The Crystal Frontier, with its powerful writing and many fine passages, reinforces that reputation.

The central, though lightly sketched, figure in this novel is the gangsterish Leonardo Barroso. Rich, powerful, politically connected, fingers in every money pie on both sides of the glass wall, he is an amoral, self-made man who despises his poor relatives. His wife, with her friends, strips her "little Indian boy" servant naked and sends him around the room with the hors d'oeuvres. Barroso appears at his juicy worst after he decides that his goddaughter Michelina Laborde (decayed aristocracy on financial uppers) will be the wife of his son Marianito (withdrawn, stumbling intellectual). Following a disastrous evening out with the young woman, Marianito, blubbering and full of Jack Daniels, vomits on his father's silk robe. Don Leonardo says with some intensity, "You screwed her, right? Tell me you did." The reader sees how things will go.

A dozen assorted characters press against, slip or crash through the transparent barrier. A representative scene occurs in a glass-walled New York office building in a connection between an advertising copy writer trying to "come up with a nice catchy slogan for a Pepsi commercial" and a decent young Mexican man whose poverty forces him to fly north with a work crew to clean Manhattan office buildings over the weekend. The scene closes with the copy writer and the young man writing their identities on the glass wall of her office and then pressing their mouths to each side in a cold symbolic kiss.

The people in these stories are stock composite characters, that is, made up of recognizable attributes that carry particular political/cultural messages. There is Barroso himself who comes to a bad American end; Juan Zamora, the good homosexual; Dionisio Rangel, a genius of Mexican cuisine ironically trapped in a lecture tour through "the gastronomic deserts of Kansas, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Indiana, or the Dakotas"; Marina, a factory worker; the tourist-taxi driver who briefly becomes Barroso's chauffeur; the European-immigrant-descendant border guard who avoids the sunlight to keep his skin pale; the illegal border crosser; and others.

If these figures appear as silhouettes with little depth, if the cultures of Mexico and the United States are loaded with such pop tarts as male strippers and Mexican women workers on a night off stuffing the strippers' jockstraps with money, if we see nationalisms instead of cultural complexities, coincidence instead of plot development, it is because such sets and characters suit Fuentes's purpose. Miss Amy, a rich and elderly racist, herself a cliche, says to her nephew, "I forbid you to touch my cliches . . . They're the shield of my prejudices. And prejudices, as the word itself indicates, are necessary for making judgments. Good judgment, Archibald, good judgment is pre-judgment. My convictions are clear, deep-rooted and unshakable." In such a construct, seemingly stilted dialogue emerges as savage and ironic commentary; the stories take on the weight of parable.



Fuentes depicts Mexicans as a people afflicted by shame, pain and bad luck PHOTOGRAPH: JULIO ETCH...

Fuentes presents Mexico as a country of poor, dignified, courteous, compassionate, hard-working people with a sense of history but afflicted by shame, pain and, above all, bad luck. The United States — which a character jokingly calls "The United States of Amnesia" for its ignorance of the events of 1848 that "stripped us of half our territory — California, Utah, Nevada, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas . . ." — is peopled with the arrogant, the insulting, the fatly comfortable.

The character Dionisio, in his journeys across the United States, "was pleased to discover that beneath the commonplaces about a uniform, robotic society devoid of culinary personality, there roiled a multiform, eccentric world, quasi-medieval in its corrosive ferment against an order once imposed by Rome and its church and now by Washington and its Capitol. How would the country put itself in order when it was full of religious lunatics who believed beyond doubt that faith, not surgery, would take care of a tumor in the lungs? How, when the country was full of people who dared not exchange glances in the street lest the stranger turn out to be an escaped paranoid authorized to kill anyone who didn't totally agree with his ideas, or a murderer released from an overcrowded mental hospital or jail . . . a neo-Nazi skinhead ready to slit the throat of a dark-skinned person, a libertarian militiaman prepared to finish off the government by blowing up federal buildings, country where teenage gangs are better armed than the police?"

"All writing is political," says the Chicano literary activist character in The Crystal Frontier, Jose Francisco, mounted on his Harley-Davidson and carrying photocopied pages of Chicano stories to Mexico and Mexican stories to Texas. "To capture from both sides so that everyone would get to know each other better."

Fuentes ends his line of stories hung between the two posts of Mexico and the United States with an exhortation to the Mexican character to speak, to communicate, for unless they do, nothing can change. The gnawing lines are a variation on the tradition attributes to Porfirio Díaz, turn-of-the-century president of Mexico, and hold the compressed central message of The Crystal Frontier.

poor Mexico,
poor United States,
so far from God,
so near to one another

Fear and Loathing in Washington DC

Jonathan Yardley

MUTUAL CONTEMPT
Lyndon Johnson, Robert Kennedy and the Feud That Shaped a Decade
By Jeff Shesol
Norton. 591pp. $32.50.

THE CENTRAL argument of this thorough, provocative book is that the rivalry between Lyndon Johnson and Robert Kennedy had effects on American life that ran far deeper than what it did to the two men. Their story, Jeff Shesol writes, "unfolds like a Greek tragedy played out on the nation's center stage," and was "the defining relationship of their political lives."

More than that, it altered almost everything it touched: "Nor can one fully comprehend the 1960s without considering the Johnson-Kennedy feud. The issues that wrenched these two men apart — Vietnam, race, poverty — were at the heart of many personal and political cleavages in those years of division. But Johnson and Kennedy were not, like student demonstrators or civil rights workers, peripheral or anonymous figures. After John Kennedy's assassination, they were the political titans of the decade. They not only responded to issues but also shaped them. From the war in Vietnam to the war on poverty, from the 'problem of the cities' to the collapse of the Democratic coalition, the major events of the sixties bear the imprint of this personal rivalry."


LBJ: A great man brought down by a tragic flaw

Shesol is right to call this a "Greek tragedy," for Lyndon Johnson was a tragic figure in the classic sense of the term: a great man of heroic dimensions brought down not by his rival but by his tragic flaw. Though most people probably would describe this flaw as vanity or insecurity — and Johnson had plenty of both — it seems to me that it was of a meaner order. Johnson could not escape the nagging and ultimately trivializing effects of his pettiness. Nothing was too small to escape his notice, and no slight was too insignificant to demand retribution.

A memorandum from one of his most thoughtful and intelligent advisers, Harry McPherson, written in 1965 as it began to seem possible that Robert Kennedy would challenge Johnson for the presidency three years hence, pointed directly to the problem, if in highly diplomatic language: "You have the office, the policies, the personal magnetism, the power to lead and inspire, and above all the power to put good ideas into effect. An obsession with Bobby and with the relationship of your best people to him may, I believe, distort policy and offend the very men you need to attract." That was precisely right. Lyndon Johnson was a man of vision and firm commitment to social justice, but when crises arose and tempers boiled, he lost sight of his "good ideas" and focused, obsessively, on his enemies, real or imaginary.

Among these none yielded pride of place to Bobby Kennedy: not Barry Goldwater, not Richard Nixon, not Eugene McCarthy, not Ho Chi Minh. Johnson loathed Kennedy because he was what Johnson himself was not and because he had what Johnson himself did not. Kennedy had a Harvard degree, a natural ease among persons of education and wit, a family fortune to underwrite his ambitions, the legacy of the fallen president and his "Camelot," and an independence that Johnson could not vitiate: "LBJ sought men's vulnerabilities, and in Kennedy he found none. Kennedy was not susceptible to Johnson's charm, flattery or intimidation. Kennedy did not fear Johnson — Johnson feared Kennedy, and hated him for it. . . . It was as if he were created to remind Johnson that his political hold was never secure, his claim to the presidency was never legitimate, and his place in history was never assured."

By contrast Kennedy was not phobic, but he harbored righteous notions about probity and politics that Johnson repeatedly violated, or so at least Kennedy believed. Two of the most colossal (and trivial) misunderstandings of 20th-century American life forever shaped Kennedy's view of Johnson: the long sequence of bumbles that finally resulted in Johnson's selection as John Kennedy's running mate in 1960, and Johnson's decision to be sworn in as president aboard Air Force One, hard upon Kennedy's assassination. Bobby Kennedy thought Johnson was callous, opportunistic, ignorant, coarse and untrustworthy; he believed that Johnson was a congenital liar, incapable of distinguishing between truth and falsehood, and he regarded everything Johnson said or wrote to him in that light.

Nothing that either man did offered the hope of lasting compromise or accommodation; there was too much pride on both sides. As Shesol marches us through all the controversies that divided them, the story assumes the dimensions of a great drama played out on a stage too vast to comprehend, its actors all too human even as they assume the mythical shapes in which we now see them. The transition from JFK to LBJ; the battles, in Congress and the streets, for civil rights; the abortive campaign to force Bobby onto the 1964 Democratic ticket as vice-presidential nominee; the War on Poverty and the failure of "community action"; the rise of RFK to the Senate and its effects on politics in New York State, which LBJ saw as the heart of his own constituency; and — hovering over everything, permeating everything — the escalation of the war in Vietnam and its calamitous fallout on the home front.

It is an appalling story, told uncommonly well by Shesol, who to date has been known as the creator of the political comic strip "Thatch" but here establishes his credentials as a historian. He has written a long book but not, unnecessarily or gratuitously long; complex and important business was transacted in the course of this rivalry, and it must be set forth in some detail. The feud ended, as we all know, at a hotel in Los Angeles in that worst of all possible years for America, 1968.

I am one of those who believe that, had Sirhan Sirhan not struck, Robert Kennedy would have won the Democratic nomination and then the presidency; I am also one of the many millions who wish that had come to pass. But as Shesol's bleak narrative makes abundantly plain, this tale was not fated for a happy ending.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
November 9 1997

IMF aid fails to reassure markets

Guardian reporters

THE International Monetary Fund sought to restore confidence to the battered markets of Southeast Asia last week through a $23 billion credit package for Indonesia linked to economic and banking reforms.

But the three-year aid package, announced by the IMF managing director, Michel Camdessus, in Washington and supplemented by $3 billion from the United States Treasury and other countries including Singapore, provoked scepticism in Indonesia and elsewhere.

World financial markets were braced for another turbulent week amid fears that recent jitters could presage a prolonged rout.

A renewed outbreak of selling in the Far East could swiftly spread to Europe and the Americas, with David Komansky, chairman of Merrill Lynch, predicting that Wall Street could fall by 20 per cent from its summer peak — implying a further 800-point drop.

Volatility remains at its most acute in Southeast Asia, where last weekend the Indonesian authorities closed 16 banks, as part of a series of measures which included trimming the national budget and abolishing several monopolies, and Hong Kong's leaders ordered a review of their strategy of maintaining the US dollar peg.

Mar'ie Muhammad, Indonesia's finance minister, said the reforms "will obviously depress economic growth for the next two years". But he expected it to rebound to 7 per cent by 1999/2000.

Mr Camdessus praised the measures, saying they "should restore confidence in the Indonesian economy and contribute to the stabilisation of regional financial markets".

Economic analysts were not so optimistic. Laksamana Sukardi said growth would probably struggle to reach 4 per cent in the next three years and only bold moves, such as scrapping protectionist national car and aircraft projects, abolishing all monopolies and rooting out corruption, would restore confidence.

Other commentators said the only way to renew confidence in the economy and the rupiah, Indonesia's currency, would be to remove President Suharto, who has ruled for 31 years.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling rates November 3	Sterling rates October 27
Australia	2.3500-2.3531	2.3935-2.3966
Austria	20.48-20.50	20.50-20.52
Belgium	60.01-60.12	60.06-60.16
Canada	2.3531-2.3554	2.3142-2.3163
Denmark	11.07-11.08	11.09-11.10
France	9.73-9.75	9.76-9.77
Germany	2.9102-2.9128	2.9132-2.9156
Hong Kong	12.96-12.97	12.79-12.81
Ireland	1.1216-1.1237	1.1153-1.1174
Italy	2,849-2,853	2,846-2,850
Japan	202.43-202.69	201.60-201.74
Netherlands	3.2767-3.2795	3.2852-3.2882
New Zealand	2.6493-2.6539	2.6532-2.6568
Norway	11.84-11.85	11.73-11.74
Portugal	296.92-297.26	296.50-296.82
Spain	245.72-246.03	245.64-245.90
Sweden	12.66-12.68	12.52-12.54
Switzerland	2.3719-2.3747	2.4078-2.4102
USA	1.6765-1.6776	1.6556-1.6565
ECU	1.4746-1.4767	1.4749-1.4770

FTSE 100 Share Index up 56.7 at 4669.4. FTSE 250 Index down 103.9 at 4663.7. Gold up $1.55 at $312.55.

Going south . . . São Paulo traders feel the impact of a global selling wave last week PHOTO: DARIO LOPEZ-MILLS

Baby boomers save a grey day

Many small investors responded to the panic in the market by rushing to buy more shares, says **Mark Tran** in New York

THERE were many frustrated small investors on Tuesday last week, the day after the Dow Jones index plunged a record 554 points. Not because they had lost money, but because they could not get through to their brokers to place "buy" orders. In New York, many skipped lunch and rushed to Schwabs, the discount brokerage, to snap up shares.

Last week's record slump on Grey Monday and its rebound on Turnaround Tuesday answered the big question hovering over small investors. Would they cut and run in a rout and contribute to the panic? But most small investors did not just stay put; they wanted *more* shares, an impressive show of popular capitalism.

One of the biggest changes since the October 1987 crash is the rise of the small investor and the proliferation of mutual funds. Before the crash, 812 mutual funds managed $241.9 billion; today, that figure has ballooned to more than 2,800 funds controlling $4,000 billion, according to the Investment Company Institute, the mutual fund trade group.

More than half of that amount is in equities as "baby boomers" put their faith in the market to tide them over when they retire. Investors pumped more than $220 billion into equity mutual funds last year, nearly double the $128 billion registered in 1995 — and the bulk of the new money is capital for retirement.

Some 80 million baby boomers in the United States need to save for their retirement, and they have learned the lessons of patience from the 1987 crash: those who stayed in the market recovered their losses in about two years, and have enjoyed huge gains in the last 10. Buy on the dips is a cliché, but small investors have taken it to heart, as they showed recently.

Wall Street houses have recognised the growing clout of the retail investor. Much of the impetus behind the flurry of mergers between securities firms lies in the desire to tap the retail market. Investment banks such as Salomon Brothers and Morgan Stanley have discovered the benefits of catering for small investors, who will be pouring money into the market during the next 20 years. Managing those assets and collecting fees is less volatile than underwriting and deal-making.

In February, Morgan Stanley, the blue chip investment bank, joined forces with Dean Witter in an $8.8 billion merger precisely to exploit the retail market. Morgan Stanley would provide strategic advice and underwrite shares and bonds for corporate clients. Meanwhile Dean Witter would use its national network to sell shares, bonds and mutual funds to millions of small investors around the country. The same desire to become a one-stop shop brought Salomon and the Travelers Group together. It is a difficult venture to pull off, and only Merrill Lynch has done it successfully. But the growing retail market is a powerful lure for the investment banks.

While Wall Street woos small investors, their interest in playing the market is being piqued by the plethora of personal finance magazines such as Worth, Money and Smart Money. There are cable networks such as CNBC and CNNfn to stoke even more interest. Most of the gurus who appear on these cable networks tell investors to stay put, providing an element of stability in the storm.

Grey Monday's freefall, however, served as a reminder of the market's brutal twists and turns. It was the first time since 1990 that the Dow had slumped as much as 10 per cent from a recent high, and it showed how easily the market could be spooked by distant events — in this case, the market turmoil in Southeast Asia. Logically, the travails of these Asian economies should have had no impact on the US stock market, underpinned by a robust economy. But, as the Federal Reserve chairman, Alan Greenspan, pointed out in his testimony to Congress the following Wednesday, the crisis in Southeast Asia was just the pretext for a market that needed to lose steam after heady gains in the past two years.

If it had not been for Southeast Asia, Mr Greenspan said, something else would have been the cause of a re-evaluation. In 1987, Mr Greenspan helped calm the markets by opening the credit spigots until the crisis passed. This time he soothed them by talking about the silver lining behind the market gyrations. The steep market losses of recent days, Mr Greenspan argued, could have a salutary effect on the real economy because the drop would dent confidence, make consumers feel less wealthy and dampen demand. That would prevent the economy from overheating and increase the likelihood that the six-and-a-half year expansion would continue.

Although small investors did not flee the market in droves, the recent events have made them more cautious. But some Wall Street analysts still think the small investor is heading for a rude awakening. Everybody is skittish and nervous, except the great unwashed public — who are convinced this is another opportunity to buy stocks on weakness, said Barton Biggs, legendary chief global strategist at Morgan Stanley. But after the recent crash the great unwashed helped save the day.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
November 9 1997

Paramedics' bid for qualifications has forced them to take distance learning to its limit, says **Peter Hetherington**

Flying doctorates

THE ultimate in distance learning was celebrated last month when a select band of graduates from the northeast of England were presented with degrees from an institution they are never likely to see.

Charles Sturt University, in New South Wales, in Australia, may be more than 15,000km away, but for the pace-setting Northumbria Ambulance Service (NAS) it was one of the few places in the English-speaking world capable of turning its staff's skills into something of a profession.

In the splendour of Alnwick Castle, 33 paramedics received their Bachelor of Health Science (Pre-Hospital Care) degree from the university's chancellor — while their bosses lamented that no British institution was capable of meeting their educational requirements.

Frustrated by the lack of interest in Britain, Laurie Caple, chief executive of NAS, found a sympathetic ear when he visited Australia for a speaking engagement three years ago.

Charles Sturt, one of the largest providers of distance education in Australia, had already started a degree course for paramedics — and the electronic jump to Britain didn't seem that much further.

Soon afterwards the dean of Charles Sturt's Faculty of Health Science, David Battersby, came to visit Mr Caple at his headquarters in Newcastle upon Tyne, and the paramedics enrolled. They received a little help from Northumbria, which agreed to pay individual course fees of about $5,000 as well as cover the cost of the necessary study books.

Learning packs, including videos and audiotapes, were sent over while a lecturer from Charles Sturt, Jean Hines, agreed to make a short bi-annual lecture trip. Following the example of Britain's Open University, study weekends were held at the ambulance service's small college north of Newcastle.

Students, most of whom have no A levels, equipped themselves with PCs and brought work assignments on disk into Northumbria's headquarters where they were e-mailed to Australia. Other written work was sent by air freight.

"The whole thing has worked much more smoothly then we could have hoped for," recalled Dave Hodge, head of human resources and training at NAS. "Our staff work incredibly hard as it is, very long days when on duty, and it takes a great effort to fit in something like this before, or after, a day's work."

Hodge himself started as an ambulance driver with no academic qualifications 18 years ago. He came up through the ranks and gained an MBA degree — which all senior executives of the service have to take — two years ago. He is now in line for a doctorate.

An Australian college offers degrees to paramedics PHOTO: FRANK MARTIN

Like most of the new graduates, Chris Kimber, a motorcycle paramedic who joined the service in 1974, has found the going tough — although he is now attracted to the prospect of gaining further qualifications. "I'll need a rest first," he said between shifts. "It took two years out of my life. It was very difficult to have any home life, with a full-time job and studying on top. But, yes, I'd like to do something else."

The paramedics' two-year course included a research project which, according to David Hodge, provided the service with some valuable pointers. One student studied the additional impact on the service through the lack of GPs [in Sunderland]. Another researched the perennial problem of back complaints among hospital staff.

Mr Caple is now determined to push his academic revolution throughout NAS, which has 3?? staff — 236 of them paramedics. He has signed a three-year agreement with Charles Sturt University and is now working with colleagues throughout the country to make the new Bachelor of Health Science degree. With a greater emphasis on community care, he believes the paramedics will increasingly be at the front line of health provision.

"The emphasis is now very much about taking the care to the patient rather than the patient to hospital," Mr Caple says. "I suspect that within 15 years there will be very little difference between the training skills of a nurse professional and a professional ambulance academic." But the question remains as to whether a British university can offer the necessary study programmes.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
November 9 1997



Implementation Manager

PIMS (Programme Information Management System)

Based in Oxford

Salary £21,407 p.a. 2½ year contract

Oxfam is currently working on a project that will lead to the replacement of its current projects database and also accounts software, both in Oxfam headquarters and field offices around the world. This project is called PIMS (Programme Information Management System). Pilot installations of the new systems will commence in international offices in mid 1998. We wish to employ an experienced manager to lead the team preparing for and then carrying out both the pilot and full implementations.

Key competencies for this post include experience of implementing information systems in distributed small office environments; considerable (5 years+) project management skills particularly in terms of planning and budget management; the ability to build and manage a team and to work with others on joint projects; experience of working in or of implementing systems in developing countries.

For further details and an application form please send a large SAE to:

International Human Resources, Oxfam, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DZ.
Please quote ref: OS/PIMS/PY/GW.
Closing date: 5 December 1997.
Interview date: 17 December 1997.

Founded in 1942, Oxfam works with people regardless of race or religion in their struggle against poverty. Oxfam UK and Ireland is a member of Oxfam International.
For further information http://www.oneworld.org/oxfam/



Oxfam UK/Ireland is striving to be an equal opportunity employer

Advertisements

It is a condition of acceptance of advertisement orders that the proprietors of The Guardian Weekly do not guarantee the insertion of any particular advertisement on a specified date, or at all, although every effort will be made to meet the wishes of advertisers; further they do not accept liability for any loss or damage caused by an error or inaccuracy in the printing or non-appearance of any advertisement. They also reserve the right to classify correctly any advertisement, edit or delete any objectionable wording or reject any advertisement.

Although every advertisement is carefully checked, occasionally mistakes do occur. We therefore ask advertisers to assist us by checking their advertisements carefully and advise us immediately should an error occur. We regret that we cannot accept responsibility for more than ONE INCORRECT insertion and that no republication will be granted in the case of typographical or minor changes which do not affect the value of the advertisement.

Eastern Africa Regional Office

IUCN The World Conservation Union

Technical Advisor
District Environmental Planning
Mt Elgon Conservation and Development Project, Phase 111

The Eastern Africa Regional Office Of IUCN - The World Conservation Union seeks to recruit a Technical Advisor, District Environmental Planning to work with the Mt Elgon Conservation and Development Project in Uganda, a project supporting the Uganda Wildlife Authority and the Ministry of Natural Resources. The oject aims to conserve the biodiversity of Mt Elgon National Park and promote sustainable development initiatives in communities adjacent to the National Park to alleviate pressure on park resources.

The Technical Advisor will play a catalytic and facilitating role, by placing emphasis on strengthening capacity within District Administration staff, to formulate and implement sub-county and district environmental plans. Environmental plans will be based on the state of the district resource base, address environmental degradation processes, and introduce a strategy for sustainable natural resource use which conserves the natural resources while addressing the development needs of the District.

The candidate must have a relevent postgraduate degree and at least seven years relevant professional expenence. He/she should have:

- demonstrated expertise and experience in land use planning, natural resource assessment and management, and environmental monitoring
- demonstrated expertise and experience in participatory approaches to planning
- an understanding of environmental economics and Government development planning
- demonstrated ability to identify training needs and to plan and implement participatory training and extension programs.
- excellent communication skills
- familiarity with working in the developing world, preferably in Africa
- demonstrated capacity to work as part of a multidisciplinary team
- experience and skills in database management and analysis

The DEPA is a two-year position based in the Mt. Elgon Conservation and Development Project office in Mbale

Applicants should send letters of application, detailed curriculum vitae and names of three professional referees to: The Regional Representative, IUCN Eastern Africa Regional Office, P.O. Box 68200, Nairobi, Kenya or fax 252 2 890615 by 5th November, 1997. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

WORLD ASSOCIATION OF GIRL GUIDES AND GIRL SCOUTS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, WORLD BUREAU

Salary in range: £30,000-£35,000 per annum
Registered Charity Number 306125

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) is the largest voluntary organisation for girls and young women in the world and is recognised as an International Non-Governmental Organisation. It consists of 136 member countries, with 33 working towards membership. WAGGGS is currently fulfilling its Mission *'to enable girls and young women to develop their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world'*, with a membership approaching ten million.

The World Bureau, in North London, is the International Secretariat of WAGGGS and seeks to appoint a Deputy Director to ensure the effectiveness of the day to day management and administration of WAGGGS in carrying out the policy decisions of the World Board, and to deputise for the Director in her absence. This is a new post and we are looking for proven experience in effective line management, financial acumen and excellent organisational and interpersonal skills. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to communicate in all media and at all levels, solve problems, possess an understanding of different cultures, be fluent in English preferably with a knowledge of French or Spanish, as well as having an acceptance of the principles of Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting.

The post holder will have the opportunity of working for a genuinely dynamic organisation with a highly professional and committed team of staff and volunteers.

For an information pack and application form, please write to the Personnel Manager, WAGGGS, World Bureau, 12c Lyndhurst Road, London NW3 5PQ. Fax No: +44 (0) 1714313764
Closing date for completed application forms is 28 November 1997. Shortlisting interviews will be held 8-10 December and final interviews in the week commencing 15 December.

HEALTHNET INTERNATIONAL

HealthNet International (HNI) is a NGO that provides health care in the aftermath of crisis, between the phases of emergency relief and sustainable development. HNI is currently looking for:

Programme Manager, Ayacucho District, Peru and Nampula Province, Mozambique

Working within a team of professionals, you will be responsible for the overall management, supervision and control of all programme activities entailing project implementation, administration, staff supervision, financial control, donor liaison, and representation.
Profile: 5+ years of project management experience in developing countries; Public Health Background; excellent coaching and training skills; excellent administrative & communication skills; proposal writing and reporting skills; fluency in English.
Peru: Extensive experience in working in community based health care; fluency in Spanish. Mozambique: Knowledge of health systems development, Portuguese an advantage.

Health Advisor, Angola

In collaboration with the Programme Manager the Health Advisor will provide technical support in the development and implementation of a health care support programme.
Profile: Public Health Background (MPH); previous experience in post-conflict situations; knowledge of Health Systems Development or Rehabilitation, and experience in Primary Health Care; proposal writing and reporting skills; good communication skills; fluency in English and knowledge of Portuguese.

For further information and job descriptions:
HealthNet International, Singel 540, 1017 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Tel: + 31.20.420.1115; Fax: + 31.20.420.15.03; E-mail: office@hni.hl

The International Rescue Committee (IRC), a not-for-profit, non-sectarian humanitarian refugee and relief organization, is currently recruiting:

Country Director (Kigali, Rwanda):

IRC began relief operations in Rwanda in the summer of 1994, and is working to improve the overall living conditions of the Rwandan population by focusing on health care, water and sanitation, nutrition, micro-enterprise, support to unaccompanied minors, and rehabilitation assistance to residents and returnees. The Country Director manages an approximately $8 million budget (18 grants), 22 expatriate, and over 250 local staff. *Requirements:* MA or MS degree in related field, at least five years of international work experience; previous supervisory experience; previous budget and fiscal oversight responsibilities; excellent communications skills, strong written and verbal French skills. Position is for 1-2 years. Contact Susan Riehl. E-mail: susanr@intercom.org: fax:212-551-3170

Country Director (Baku, Azerbaijan):

IRC provides emergency relief supplies, shelter/infrastructure rehabilitation, income generation, and public health services to refugees and internally displace people in Azerbaijan.
Responsibilities: oversee the implementation of programs in Azerbaijan; monitor, develop and report on programs (to IRC and donors): represent IRC to local governments, donors and international agencies.
Requirements: graduate degree in related field, 3-5 years overseas management experience in refugee relief or development. Position is for 12 months.
Contact: andrew Roberts email:andrew@intercom.org. Fax: 212-551-3170

Center Director

Center for Wildlife Management Studies - Athi River, Kenya
Center for Wetland Studies - Baja, Mexico
Center for Marine Resources - South Caicos, British West Indies
Center for Rainforest Studies -Yungaburra, Queensland, Australia

START DATE: JANUARY 1998

Duties for each Center: Supervise a Program Director who will lead the faculty team as they teach case studies, an integrated curriculum relevant to each center, in relationship with conservation, research management, ecology and culture: oversee spring and fall semester programs (32 students each) and two 30 day summer programs and oversee supervision, community relations, fundraising, risk management, local recruiting, budgets, logistics and the creation of long and short term goals of the center.

QUALIFICATIONS: PhD or Masters in a relevant field, 5 + years of demonstrated upper level management experience, entrepreneurial ability, and proven experience with the following: Institution building; fundraising; teaching college aged students; budget management; project management; giving presentations; running academic or similar programs; and heading environmental issue driven projects, programs or organizations. Must have the desire and drive to develop and head a school along with the ability to articulate the direction for the Center and the ability to travel up to 50% of the time and the lifestyle to live on site the other times. Experience of working and living in Kenya, Australia, Baja Mexico or the Caribbean under field conditions preferred.

TO APPLY: Send a detailed letter explaining research experience, interests and skills, CV with names and telephone numbers of 3 references to:

Trudy Cullen
Center Director Search
The School for Field Studies
16 Broadway
Beverly, MA 01915
PHONE: (978) 927-7777 / FAX: (978) 927-5127

SUMMER 1998 TEACHERS' COURSES

The Institute is one of the largest university language centres in the UK. Its summer programme for EFL teachers includes:

- Teaching and Learning English
- CEELT Preparation course
- Teaching English for Specific Purposes
- Teaching English for Business Purposes
- Teaching English for Medical Purposes
- Teaching Literature in EFL
- Grammar and Communicative Teaching
- Drama for TEFL
- Teaching Young Learners
- Pronunciation for Language Teachers
- English Today - *a new course in the description of English*

INSTITUTE *for* APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES, THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
21 Hill Place, Edinburgh EH8 9DP, UK.
Tel: 0131-650 6200 Fax: 0131-667 5927
Email: IALS.enquiries@ed.ac.uk
Website: http://www.ials.ed.ac.uk

International Organisation Development (IOD)

is a young, growing consultancy firm specialising in work in the Public Sector, in areas of institutional and organisation development, transforming government ministries, strengthening Local Government, and setting up 'next step' agencies in developing countries.

We are looking for

'ASSOCIATE' CONSULTANTS

with an interest in the above areas, keen to join a dynamic company. Write with CV (on disc) to:
The Practice Manager, International Organisation Development, 2 Shutlock Lane, Moseley, Birmingham B12 9TZ.
Fax. 0121 444 8476 E-Mail. iod-consulting@easynet.co.uk

merlin
Medical Emergency Relief International

Combating refugee health crisis in DRC (ex Zaire)
Tacking epidemics in Tajikistan
Maternal & Child Health in Afghanistan

We are seeking experienced emergency aid workers to join our register to respond to ongoing and future disasters worldwide.

MERLIN is a British medical charity providing emergency medical care in disaster zones worldwide. Current operations include Afghanistan, Chechnya, DR Congo, Liberia, Siberia, Tajikistan, Cambodia, Burma, N.Korea & Albania.

Please send CV with covering letter to: HR Dept, 14 David Mews, London W1M 1HW. Fax: 0171 487 4042, email: hq@merlin.org.uk REF: GW02

Reg Charity No: 1016607.

University of Cambridge
The International Summer School 1998

Over 60 subjects offered in Terms I and II and Specialised Summer Schools in

- **English Literature**
- **History**
- **Art History**
- **Shakespeare**
- **Medieval Studies**

Full details from: International Division, University of Cambridge, (Ref GW), Board of Continuing Education, Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge CB3 8AQ, England
Telephone (UK=44)1954 210636
Fax (UK=44) 1954 210677

ihe INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EXCHANGE
Health Jobs in Developing Countries

International Health Exchange (IHE) can help you find a challenging and rewarding position in a developing country.

We can supply you with information on numerous jobs with international aid agencies through our magazine, job supplement and register of health professionals. IHE is a charity which gives you the opportunity to contribute to equitable health development.

Phone, fax or mail for an information pack:
International Health Exchange, 8-10 Dryden Street, London WC2E 9NA.
Tel: +44 (0) 171 836 5833 Fax: +44 (0) 171 379 1239.
Email: healthexchange@compuserve.com
Charity No 1002749



FINANCE PERSONNEL

The International Rescue Committee (IRC), a not-for-profit, non-sectarian humanitarian refugee and relief organization, is currently recruiting Finance Coordinators for Guinea, Liberia, and Tanzania.

Requirements: University degree in accounting with CPA (or Chartered accountant), 3-5 years' relevant experience, knowledge of fund accounting, procurement and fin. mngmnt. Of US AID and UN cooperative agreements; knowledge of SunSystems, MS Office and Excel; at least 2 years' exp. Managing funds for development projects; over seas exp. Positions for 12 months. Compensation: US$25-30,000 Contact: Susan Riehl: susanr@intrescom.org.

Send resume and cover letter to e-mail and All faxes to: 001-212-551-3170.

Working for us, working for human rights

CAMPAIGNERS-MIDDLE EAST REGION
POST 1-EAST MEDITERRANEAN TEAM Ref: mep/97/7
POST 2-NORTH AFRICA TEAM Ref: mep/97/8
£18,643.78 per annum

Using your campaigning skills, you will act as a focal point for developing effective strategies and actions, mobilizing the worldwide membership to campaign against human rights violations in the Middle East Region.

You will provide expert advice and service to the AI membership in relation to action techniques and produce campaigning materials for them on designated countries within the region.

Fluent written and spoken English and a good knowledge of written and spoken Arabic (post 1 &2) and French (post 2 only) are essential, as is a broad knowledge of and a sensitivity to the cultures and peoples of the region.

Experience of office administration systems and the ability to work as part of a self-managing team, often under pressure, are also essential.

For further information please contact: Human Resources Program, Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London, WC1X 8DJ. Telephone 0171 413 5811 (24 hour answer machine). Please quote the appropriate reference number. Email address: jobs@amnesty.org Closing date: 27 December 1997.

The International Secretariat of Amnesty International actively promotes cultural diversity and Equal Opportunities.

amnesty international



FAIRFAX UNIVERSITY (USA)
- Int. Home Study degree programs
- Credits for prior learning/experience
- BA, MBA, PhD etc programs in most subjects
- Entry any time

Prospectus from UK representative office: EES Offices (FUW), P.O. Box 400 Peterborough PE2 6GD U.K. Tele/Fax: +44 (0) 1733 238923



TEFL COURSES

Trinity College Certificate (4-week full-time) for those with no experience of teaching English. Trinity College Diploma (distance-learning) for experienced teachers.

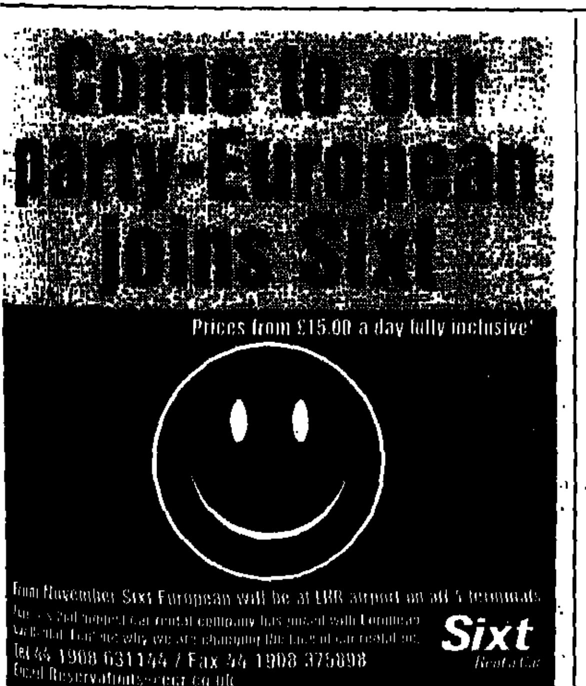
Also, courses of English for foreign students.



For more details, phone
UK ++44 171 734 3889, fax 287 1623,
e-mail oxhc@easynet.co.uk
OXFORD HOUSE COLLEGE,
LONDON, 3, OXFORD STREET W1R 1RF

CLASSIFIED

CAR HIRE



Thrifty

- 10% discount on Published Tariff - E-Mail address.
- Sports and classic cars available at Heathrow and Gatwick.
- New Sensational Value Club Card available from 01/04/97.
- Prices still from £99 per week (inc. of CDW and VAT).

Call, write, fax or e-mail us now quoting (GWY)

Tel: +44 1494 442110
Fax: +44 1494 474732

E-mail: davids@thrifty.co.uk
Thrifty Car Rental, The Old Courthouse, Hughenden Road, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP13 5DT

ACCESS CAR HIRE U.K Tel. +44 (0) 1189 608204 Fax. +44 (0) 1189 606203
Horncastle Garage Ltd (Dept.X)
Bath Road, Reading, Berkshire RG30 2HS

SPECIAL OFFERS!!

AVAILABLE ON SELECTED MODELS
AIRPORT TERMINAL MEET & GREET SERVICE
PLEASE WRITE PHONE OR FAX FOR DETAILS

FORD FIESTA 1.1 LX
Only £199.00 for 2 weeks

Fully inclusive of comprehensive insurance CDW, delivery/collection to Heathrow, Gatwick or Central London, unlimited mileage and VAT.

PAYLESS CAR RENTAL AT THE EXCELSIOR HOTEL HEATHROW, THE FORTE POSTHOUSE GATWICK AND MANCHESTER AIRPORT

	GROUP	7DAYS	14DAYS	21DAYS	28DAYS
ONE	PEUGEOT 106 VAUXHALL CORSA	95.00	186.00	274.00	353.00
TWO	ROVER 200	129.00	248.00	359.00	469.00
THREE	PEUGEOT 306 DIESEL	146.00	279.00	404.00	514.00
FOUR	TOYOTA COROLLA AUTO ROVER 200 AUTO	179.00	339.00	491.00	639.00
FIVE	PEUGEOT 406 MITSUBISHI CARISMA	199.00	389.00	569.00	739 00
SIX	PEUGEOT 406 AUTO	209.00	399.00	582.00	759.00
SEVEN	PEUGEOT 806	299.00	588.00	869.00	1099.00
EIGHT	TOYOTA PREVIA AUTO	349.00	679.00	949.00	1149.00

*RATES INCLUSIVE OF TCDW AND VAT *SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE FROM ALL TERMINALS *OPEN SEVEN DAYS *UNLIMITED MILEAGE *FREE ONE WAY HEATHROW - GATWICK *FRIENDLY AND EFFICIENT SERVICE
CALL OR FAX CENTRAL RESERVATIONS
TEL: +44 1794 830883 FAX: +44 1794 830884



NEVER HIRE A CAR UNTIL YOU HAVE CHECKED KENDALL'S PRICES
7, 12 & 15-Seaters for hire
Airport Collection
KENDALL CARS
34 Aldershot Rd., Guildford GU2 6AF
Tel: +44 1483 574434
Fax: +44 1483 34781

VALUE CAR HIRE

Ford Escort 1.8D 3dr	£105 p.w.
Ford Escort 1.4/8D 5dr	£110 p.w.
Ford Mondeo 1.8 5dr	£125 p.w.
Ford Mondeo Automatic	£135 p.w.
Ford Mondeo 1.8 Estate	£135 p.w.

Late model cars. fully inclusive rates. Meet and greet services, from Heathrow or Gatwick.
Phone - Fax U.K. +44 1403 287688
4 Oliver Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 1LH



Out of Print books English and U.S

Found and sent worldwide. A Helpful and efficient service with no search fees and no obligation. Write, fax or phone with your wants.
Caroline Hartley Booksearch
2 Hoole Street,
Chesterfield, England S41 0AR
Tel/Fax: +44 1246 558481
email:101707.65@Compuserve.com

PERSONAL

Looking for a
Head Chef

Must be fully qualified in Korean cooking.
Must have ten years experience.
Must understand and communicate Korean Language.
Basic salary of £800.00 P.C.M.
Please contact
Mr Chee
Myung GA Korean Restaurant
1 Kingly Street, London W1R 5LF
Tel: 0171-734-8220

TELECOMM

MOBILE PHONE HIRE

Top quality mobile phone or SIM card hire for the international GSM network on arrival to or departure from, the UK
Mobile number advised prior to departure
Prompt itemised billing on return

global PHONE LTD
Worldwide Specialists in Mobile Phone Hire
in association with vodafone
Tel (+44) (0)1483 420 690
Fax (+44) (0)1483 427 120
Email Sales@Global-Phone.com
HTTP://www.Global-Phone.com

MAIL ORDER

ORIGINAL IRISH GRANDFATHER SHIRT



For generations the GLENESKE shirt has been a traditional part of everyday life in rural Ireland. 100% brushed cotton, with fast colours, the GLENESKE offers warmth, comfort and durability, fashionable and practical, for men and women.

Cream background with black, blue, red, green or fawn stripes. Also plain white.

S/M/L/XL £19.99 XXL/XXXL £21.99
KNEELENGTH NIGHTSHIRTS (blue or red stripe only) add £5.00

GLENESKE

The Grandfather Shirt Co

Sarah Boseley reports on the plight of inexperienced teenagers who carry young lives in their hands

The cradle of trust

A BRITISH au pair, Louise Woodward, is found guilty of killing baby Matthew Eappen. The jury in Cambridge, Massachusetts, spends three days deliberating, but in the end accepts the prosecution case that Woodward shook or battered him to death.

Who is the victim in this dreadful story? Baby Matthew and the parents who have lost their child, certainly. But also Louise Woodward. Whether or not she harmed the baby, it is clear she should not have been given responsibilities for which she — a girl just out of school, not a trained nanny — was obviously unsuited.

Those who think the Eappen tragedy could not happen in Britain are wearing blindfolds. Childcare is a free market. There is almost no regulation. Parents are walking a tightrope when they place their precious child in the hands of a stranger. The only safety net is the word of a previous family that nothing untoward has happened.

This unregulated free-for-all fails parents, fails nannies and au pairs, who sometimes find themselves propelled by commercial agencies into situations they cannot cope with. Most of all, it fails children.

Au pair agencies of the sort that sent Louise to the United States are regulated, they will argue. US statutes demand they make checks. They ask for references. Let us pass on the fact that references are often for babysitting, from friends' families. But do the agencies explain to the girls that what is dressed up as a cultural exchange is in fact a means of exporting cheap labour to the US? In 1994, Senator Patrick Leahy complained it was "sold abroad as a great way to experience American culture and here as a great way to get inexpensive childcare".

The expectations of girls who have recently left school, with a bit of babysitting experience and perhaps younger siblings, are an ocean apart from those of American families. Working parents in the US believe they are employing a cut-price, full-time nanny who will get up at the crack of dawn and spend a nine-hour day in sole charge of their children five — or even six — days a week. British au pairs, however much they like children, go out for the travel and the fun. There can be a rude awakening. Some girls cannot cope. Sometimes, it leads to tragedy.

Angela Martin, head of the Select Nannies agency, has heard some stories from the girls who return and later sign on with her as nannies. "One girl was told: 'We want you to be here every evening by 8.30 in the house to let us go out seven nights a week.' That was after a 12-hour shift. When the girl complained, they said: 'That's what you are here for. You are here to do what we say.'

"The girls don't know anything about the background of the families. They all think they are going to be in a movie star's house in California.

"One girl was left stranded. The original family situation was in a nice area with shopping malls and lots to do. They moved to the middle of nowhere, three miles from the end of a dirt road. The girl was told she was not allowed to go to other people's houses or take the baby out. She didn't have a weekend off for nine weeks. She got in touch with another nanny and organised to go to Disneyland on a Sunday. It was one of the girls' birthday. The family sacked her. She was left at the airport with no money. She had to phone home for the fare."

Not all experiences are bad. Some girls have a wonderful time. But concerns led Congress to consider removing the cultural programme status of the au pair scheme. Interestingly, while some reforms were made in 1995, the parents' lobby forced it to scrap its recommendation that only those over 21 could look after children under two and to dilute the need for the au pair to be supervised when they first arrive from a week to three days.

In Britain, too, some of those who offer their services as nannies have no experience or training. Because any woman can have a child, the theory runs, any woman is fundamentally capable of looking after a child. How wrong.

In opposition, the Labour party backed calls for a national nanny register, which would include police checks and regular inspections, and the regulation of agencies. Now it is in government, Labour, which is committed to helping single mothers get out to work and backs women in the workplace, says it is not a priority.

Yet, in the wake of Dunblane and other disasters, there are strict controls over those who work with children in the public and voluntary sectors. Britain is heading towards a paedophile register that will record not only convictions but suspicions of abuse. For parents who employ nannies, au pairs or mother's helps, there is no protection at all. These are private arrangements, says the state. It is an attitude that harks back to the days of the employee who belonged to you, body and soul.

But the world has turned. The enormous boom in the need for childcare has been due to women going out to work. They are not employing a household of servants but a substitute mother, in charge of and alone with their child in their home. Nobody, most times, is watching.

Anyone can be a nanny. The main marketplaces are agencies or The Lady magazine. A small ad attracts dozens of applicants, many of them speaking English poorly, offering their services at cheap rates on the black market. Many have little or no experience. They find jobs because they are willing to work for very little money, without tax or state welfare contributions, for families who are strapped for cash.

Those campaigning against this state of affairs are at the respectable and expensive end of the market where nannies are qualified and generally well-paid — the Professional Association of Nursery Nurses, the Norland Nursery Training College, the professional journal Nursery World and Playpen, one of whose founders is director of the Nanny Agency in Epsom, Surrey. They say it is not for the sake of status but for child protection that those working as nannies should be on a compulsory register, subject to police checks and a code of conduct. Many nannies agree with them.

Louise Davis, principal of Norland Nannies, says: "I sincerely believe the Department of Health has a responsibility for children cared for by nannies." But the Nanny Umbrella, the pressure group of which Norland is part, was disappointed to see no mention of a register in the Early Excellence document put forward by Labour, the attitude seeming to be that nannies are for the rich and privileged. That is not so, says Davis.

Ann Waddington, a barrister working on childcare cases, says it is appalling that there is no centralised database where parents can at least ensure their nanny has no criminal record. "There is no element of supervision within the home because the mother is out at work, which is what this government is promoting. We are leaving the most vulnerable sections of the community absolutely exposed to harm."

Which brings us back to au pairs in the US. "Agencies should stop putting girls like Louise Woodward in circumstances where they are going to be over-stretched. It is a recipe for disaster." Wages are fixed in the US, but UK agencies push up the salaries to increase their commission, she alleges, which raises the expectations of the parents. "I know a huge number of nannies who have been put into jobs for which they don't meet the criteria. But if the placement breaks down after six months, it's brilliant for [the agency]. They can send her somewhere else, with more commission."

The American au pair scheme effectively offers unqualified girls to families who want cheap labour. "We are a very short step away from the same position here," she says.


Guilty . . . Louise Woodward hears the jury's verdict PHOTO: TED FITZGERALD

British nanny trapped in the home from hell

AMANDA HARRISON **was 18 and had just left school. She wanted a year out — a year of fun, travel and excitement far from home, *writes Sarah Boseley*. America beckoned and, like many girls in the gap year, she signed up to be an au pair. In a strange parallel with Louise Woodward, the couple she was sent to were in the medical profession. The husband was a doctor and the wife an anaesthetist. They lived in Atlanta, Georgia, in a huge house with a swimming pool. "It was quite awesome," said Amanda.**

She had been told by the agency to expect a new-born baby but there were some surprises in store. It was a surrogate baby, delivered to the house a week after Amanda arrived. Not only was Amanda surprised. So were all the couple's friends. Amanda was initially introduced to their circle as the daughter of a British friend. And then . . . guess what! Suddenly they had a baby and she was the nanny.

The couple behaved as if they had a new toy, said Amanda. "For the first few weeks, they were buying expensive outfits. They would wheel me and the baby out to show us off."

But it was she, the young British student with no child-care qualifications and with experience limited to babysitting and voluntary work in a primary school, who was left literally holding the baby. "I was looking after her 24 hours a day. She was sleeping in my bed for about the first two months. I had total responsibility. I was the one getting up in the night."

What was the child to think? "The poor baby," said Amanda. "It was like I was her mother."

When the two of them were brought in to be shown off to friends and the adoptive mother would pick up the child, "she would crane her neck around trying to watch me". The baby would cry. "Your natural instinct is to pick her up." But when Amanda did, and the baby quickly quietened, the couple did not like it. Relations became strained. "They weren't interested in the child at all. The baby screamed when they went near. It got to psychological power games.

"The car of the season was a Jaguar. The man said it was a beautiful car. Then he told me he had a toy in the garage. It was a new black Jag. I said my father had one. He didn't talk to me for a week." She had not understood the couple's perceptions of the British. "They thought everybody in Britain was a backward coalminer's daughter or like Princess Diana." Either way, employing an English nanny was a status symbol.

Amanda was on call the whole time and was not allowed any use of the car. So much for the 45-hour week and alternate free weekends written into the contract. She knew that what was happening was not right but took the blame on herself: "I just thought it was my fault because I didn't know any better. And it was pride, after moving away from home and going to America."

Luckily, she knew another British au pair not far away, who told the agency's local representative what was going on. "She had a chat with me and said, 'Right — we're getting you out of there now'. They picked me up and I was out." She had been with the family for four months. "The agency placed another girl with them after that. She was there five months. She pretty much had a nervous breakdown. They made her clean out the dogs and the swimming pool."

Leaving the child was hard for Amanda. "It was such a wrench to leave her after four months because she was my baby. She would be 11 now." Her second experience, with a child of two, was totally different, and very happy. But she knows now that the tiny baby who thought she was Mum was lucky in one way for those four months. The pressure of caring for such a small child might have led another girl over the edge.

"Thank God I was fine with her and loved her, but they should have had somebody with loads of experience with new-born babies."


Amanda . . . victim of psychological power games

Letter from Montserrat Lally Brown

Under the volcano

I WISH Beryl were still here. I miss her weekly visit She used to call round as regular as clockwork on a Friday afternoon and we would talk Montserrat, about the volcano, about her life and about my life. We came from two different cultures, but we were friends.

She would lift the box of mango, pawpaw and bananas from her head and put it beside me, ready for my selection. Leathery with age, she was tiny but tough, and would carry that box for miles, hawking her fresh fruit and vegetables around her regular customers. Sometimes she would rest, sitting in the shade of the mahogany tree on the main road, appearing to doze but always alert for a passing customer.

Beryl's home was up in the fertile hills beside the mountain. Until the volcano woke up two years ago.

None of us here could have imagined what the future held in store. Slowly, inexorably, the volcano grew from an inconvenient baby, blowing steam from vents in the hillside, to a greedy gargantuan giant devouring the southern part of Montserrat with pyroclastic flows of hot gas and ash.

It wasn't long before we were ordered to move further north to a safer part of the island, abandoning the fertile farming land and the capital of Plymouth to the ashy appetite of the volcano. Beryl moved too. Sharing a small room with two other people, she continued to sell what fruit she could find — some limes, plantains or grapefruit. Two or three times Beryl was tempted to sneak back to her home in the hills to pick the fruit which had ripened in her absence.

Apparently she was on just such an expedition on June 25 when part of the growing dome of the volcano collapsed without warning, sending millions of tons of ash and rocks in a scorching pyroclastic flow down its flanks. In a matter of minutes an area of almost 6km was covered with a thick, white-hot layer of ash.

An island in shock counted the cost. Nine villages were devastated. Nineteen people were reported missing presumed dead, and several more were badly burned. Only eight bodies were recovered, and one of them was Beryl's. The mountain had claimed its first victims and Montserrat went into mourning.

The volcano continues to dominate our lives. New areas have been designated as exclusion zones and barriers erected. Four times I have moved, but the volcano can still touch me directly. On September 21 there was an abrupt change in the type of volcanic activity. Explosive eruptions began to occur, at a rate of two to three a day. First I would hear the boom of the explosions, a rumbling like thunder. Then I would see the convoluting cauliflower of the eruption column rising into the sky. Mesmerised by its awesome beauty, I would stand and watch as it writhed and rolled upwards, sometimes reaching 30,000ft.

We had 75 of these eruptions before they stopped, just as abruptly as they had started, last month. But some of those columns of ash collapsed back on Montserrat and sent pyroclastic flows spinning down all sides of the volcano, reaching the sea, burning the airport, devastating what was left of Plymouth.

Occasionally, the wind direction conspired with the volcano to send the ash clouds over us in the northern part of Montserrat. The sky overhead would darken as the ominous black cloud rumbled and cracked with thunder and lightning, dumping a variety of volcanic debris over us as it passed. From a raining veil of grey, choking talc to two-inch lumps of pumice hammering the roof, over the past month I've cleaned up after them all.

At the end of October the volcano reverted to dome growth again. The volume of the dome was estimated to be a massive 68 million cubic metres of steaming rubble. It is the highest point on Montserrat, at a towering 3,198ft. I thought the crater left by the explosions was vast and hoped that this phase might give us something of a respite. But I have been told that the magma is rising to the surface and replenishing the lost material at a rate equal to the size of a small car per second. It will be no time at all before the crater is filled.

No one can say for certain what will happen next. And no one can say how long the volcano will remain active. We just continue to live in its shadow, and wait.

A Country Diary

Richard Mabey

CHILTERNS: The 10th anniversary of the great storm of October 1987 was a reminder of just how resilient native woodlands are, if they're given a little breathing space. Contrary to what the forestry Jeremiahs predicted, the stricken Chilterns woods haven't vanished from the face of the earth, or been swallowed up by what Nan Fairbrother once called "the state of original sin in our landscape" — scrub. Indeed, the only areas that now look less than woods are those where there has been wholesale tidying up and replanting. Everywhere else, the mattress of wreaked timber has served as a rough shelter for spectacular natural regeneration.

In my own small wood, horizontal hornbeams have continued to thrive, sending up vertical shoots from the trunk. Stripped oaks have put out new ruffs. Ash, as usual, has been the great opportunist. Thickets of seedlings have shot up through the tangled wood, and are already 20ft high in many places. On more acid soils, birch is behaving in the same way.

Everywhere less prominent trees — holly, whitebeam, rowan, hazel and field maple — have appeared out of the potent combination of new light and a run of good seed years. Only the beech has done badly, which perhaps reflects how artificially high its population was in the extensive beech plantations of the Chilterns.

But species lists don't give much idea of the sheer vivacity of these aspiring woods, the mix of heights and densities, the way that dense clumps of saplings alternate with butterfly-rich glades, or the newly wild character of the woodland floor itself, with its holes and hummocks and root-plates like miniature chalk cliffs.


Under threat . . . the Banaue rice terraces face a new, subterranean peril PHOTOGRAPH: HELDUR NETOCNY

Worm turns on Philippine rice terraces

Adam Easton in Banaue

ALREADY **under threat from poor maintenance and cultural change, the 2,000-year-old Banaue rice terraces in the northern Philippines are facing a bizarre new menace — giant earthworms.**

The narrow terraces, which rise like stairs up the hillsides and have been dubbed the "eighth wonder of the world" by the country's tourism department, are slowly being eroded by the worms, which can grow up to 45cm long.

It is thought the worms arrived when higher-yielding rice strains were imported after the second world war. Christopher Pagadut, of the Rice Terraces Commission, has studied the impact of the worms. "They bore deep within the terrace stones, which produces an effect like a hole in a dike. When the rains come in the rainy season they wash away the soil, leading to the collapse of the wall and the terrace," he says.

Mr Pagadut is looking at methods to control the worms that will not damage the fragile terraces. Planting sunflowers had only a limited effect, and treating the soil with a solution of soap powder and salt and using pesticides caused environmental damage.

The most effective method has been a pest control system used by the Ifugao tribe, who, it is believed, first began building the terraces between 200BC and 100AD. They mixed forest vines with water and treated the soil with the concoction during planting. But vines from the rainforest are already depleted.

The terraces face other threats. Young Ifugaos are deserting the uplands for the cities and there is a shortage of water for irrigation.

To halt the decline, the Philippine tourism minister, Mina Gabor, is considering charging tourists who visit the site.

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

WHY **does autumn have a separate American name, while the other three seasons don't?**

THE word autumn has a medieval French, originally Latin, root, whereas the words for the other seasons are of Germanic origin. In Britain, the French-speaking, fashionable classes managed to displace the original expression "leaf fall" from the language, whereas the more down-to-earth Pilgrim Fathers retained it when they set off for the New World. — *Terence Hollingworth, Blagnac, France*

HOW **do I get rid of the pigeons that infest the balcony of my flat?**

ATTACH one or more plastic children's pinwheels to your balcony railing. This not only keeps birds away, but brightens your balcony at the same time. — *Terry Murray, Toronto, Ontario, Canada*

IF YOUR balcony frame is wood, insert brass drawing pins along the lower level at 12in intervals then along the top starting at 18in then 12in spaces. With a reel of clear nylon fishing line, make a diagonal but invisible V-shaped barrier. If the balcony rail is metal, glue on some studs or something. The angle of the line disrupts the birds' navigation and, once encountered, causes them to change direction. — *Malcolm Newell, Adelaide, South Australia*

NOTHING non-lethal is likely to be effective in the long run. Nevertheless, some amusement is still possible. My wife and I have found that a good quality, high-powered water pistol — when used with patience, vigilance and stealth — is very effective. A direct hit appears to confuse them totally. — *William Krog, Buenos Aires, Argentina*

BUY a cat and let him go on the balcony. At first his food costs will be quite low, but they will rise as the pigeons learn. — *Kevin Prince, Trieste, Italy*

DEVELOP a taste for squab. — *William O Moeser, Springfield, Vermont, USA*

HAS bird song changed over the ages?

LAST YEAR, every morning and evening, a blackbird sang outside our window. Without fail, it incorporated the telephone ringing tone into its song. — *Geoff Dobson, Ashburton, New Zealand*

I CAN'T **remember having a "square meal", Can someone explain this expression?**

A "SQUARE MEAL" is a good meal, "fair and square". Ancient Greek had a similar idiom. People called a good man *tetragonon*, which meant "four cornered or "square". — *Janet Fairweather, Ely, Cambridgeshire*

Any answers?

I HAVE **been told that a male child will always grow up to be taller than his mother. Is this true? — *Mike Hardbattle, Leicester***

SOME **years ago, Edward de Bono was brought in to advise the Venezuelan government on how to improve its education system through "lateral thinking" in the classroom. Was this experiment successful? — *Anthony Ferner, Leamington Spa***

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/+44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ. The Notes & Queries website is at http://nq.guardian.co.uk/

Japanese action painting

THEATRE
Michael Billington

BASED on a text by the avant-garde writer Shuji Terayama, and blending drama, music and spectacle, the lavishly operatic Shintoku-Maru at London's Barbican Theatre proves that Yukio Ninagawa, famed in the West for his Macbeth and Medea, is one of the great image-makers of modern theatre.

The show starts with the recorded voice of Alan Rickman giving us a somewhat convoluted plot synopsis. But when the action starts, all becomes clear: this is really a Japanese Phedre — with odd echoes of Hamlet and Oedipus — with a happy ending.

The Beatle-mopped hero, Shintoku-Maru, is haunted by the memory of his late mother. But when his father buys a new wife in the market-place, S-M is compulsively drawn to his stepmother, and, after a good many ups and downs including a trip to the underworld, they finally consummate their love.

Not speaking Japanese, I cannot judge the literary merits of the piece, but Ninagawa once again proves himself a master of choric spectacle. The show's opening and closing image, for instance, offers a restless, turbulent kaleidoscope of a seething Japanese thoroughfare filled with masked welders, cyclists, rickshaw-drivers, parasolled brides, traders bearing on backs and shoulders ancient TV sets, and even what looked like a portable house. Urban Japan's strange mixture of past and present is caught in a dream-like image.

Ninagawa studied the visual arts and he often treats the stage like a giant canvas. When the hero's father goes to choose a bride from a group of run-down travelling players, the horror of it is conveyed by the sight of grotesquely supplicant figures reaching out from behind a portable cage as if part of a Wedekind-like human zoo. And the underworld, filled with mothers seeking their children, is evoked through floating candlelit barges and a melancholic procession of giant-stemmed flowers.

Terayama, who died in 1983 and was a controversially provocative figure, meant us to be shocked by the story; and there is one particularly chilling moment when the hero, disguised as his stepmother, starts to molest and abuse her young son.

But the overwhelming impression is of the haunting strangeness of forbidden love and of the inclusiveness of Japanese theatre. In Britain, we divide theatre into separate compartments; in Japan, an avant-garde story with classical echoes easily blends with soft rock, choreographed movement and retina-ravishing spectacle.

Tatsuya Fujiwara as the hero is all confused boyishness, Kayoko Shiraishi as his stepmother exudes guilt-ridden passion, and Sumio Yoshii's lighting contributes much by its subtle chiaroscuro. But Ninagawa is the master synthesiser who brings it all together, and proves that he has the capacity to paint with people.



In time-honoured fashion, rows are brewing about this year's Turner Prize and its all-female shortlist. But, says **Adrian Searle**, for once the art is more important

May the best woman win

THERE'S usually an argument when the Turner Prize exhibition opens, and this year will be no exception. At 1996's prize-giving ceremony for the all-male shortlist, compere Joan Bakewell rattled her space-age jewellery and promised girl power in 1997; yet instead of the rude girls and obvious contenders Sarah Lucas and Tracey Emin, this year's artists are Christine Borland, Cornelia Parker, Gillian Wearing and Angela Bulloch.

The controversy over the Turner Prize this time, however, is that there is no real controversy. An all-women shortlist? Who but a nincompoop could complain? No painting? Last month saw the previously slack Jerwood painting prize awarded to 1996 Turner nominee Gary Hume. Last week, the John Moores Painting exhibition opened in Liverpool. The Turner and the Moores hand out £20,000 to the winners, while the Jerwood offers £30,000. The difference is that the Turner beano gets the publicity, including the swanky televised award dinner on December 2. Here we go again.

Whether or not the contenders on show at the London's Tate Gallery are the best artists in Britain is another story. Best for what, we might ask ourselves. Most entertaining? Most telly-friendly? Most thought-provoking? Art that isn't thought-provoking isn't worth thinking about, much less looking at.

The centrepiece of Parker's Turner installation is a companion-piece to her 1991 installation Cold Dark Matter (An Exploded View), an exploded garden shed now in the Tate's collection. Mass (Colder, Darker Matter) comprises the charred timbers of a wooden church destroyed by lightning in Texas.

Like much of her work, Mass (the double-edged title is one of its better elements) depends on meanings that have as much to do with labelling and context as with any intrinsic value in the materials. The work is a fake frozen moment, a drawing in space, an explosion of charred wooden beams and charcoal meteorites dangling from strings. As much as anything else, it is a 3-D drawing.

Her second display at the Tate features a pair of corroded commemorative silver-plated wedding goblets, Twenty Years Of Tarnish, which would come in handy at a marriage guidance session as a visual aid. There are also earplugs moulded from fluff collected in the Whispering Gallery of St Paul's Cathedral and a Georgian silver spoon drawn out into a wire as long as the Niagara Falls are high. This last is called Measuring Niagara With A Teaspoon. All this is deft, poetic, and at its best resonant and poignant. Parker's work is a reliquary of unconsidered, everyday objects transformed into powerful, sometimes playful symbols. Many of her inadvertent souvenirs and ephemeral relics have just the kind of symbolism beloved by poets and novelists.

I had my doubts about the inclusion of both Parker and Christine Borland. Their works involve an almost forensic approach to objects, and both depend on ideas of context, playing with the conventions of museum display and taxonomy. Furthermore both are artists whose sensibilities touch on life's mutability and its miseries, commemorating losses and falsifications. Both, too, are highly dependent on labelling, inscriptions, and the histories of the items they work with. Borland shows three works at the Tate: a group of life-size portrait busts on plinths; two little leather dolls; and an installation about Charles Byrne, the 7ft 10in tall "Irish Giant" who died in 1783, and Caroline Crachami, the 22in "Sicilian Dwarf" who died at the age of nine in 1824. The skeletons of both reside in the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons.

HERE their bodies exist as traces: Borland had replicas of their skeletons made, and used them as stencils, laying the fabricated bones out on sheets of glass that were then dusted with fine powder. The bones were then taken away, leaving a powdery silhouette of the absent forms. The sheets of glass are presented as shelves, protruding from the Tate's walls. Carefully angled lighting casts the images through the glass and on to the walls themselves. The image of the little girl hovers a couple of feet above the floor, while O'Brien's supine skeleton hangs way above our heads.

Both people were ill-used in both life and death. O'Brien's bones were stolen, while Crachami's body was sold to anatomists without the girl's parents being told. The story's the thing, but Borland's installation doesn't quite work, in terms of the relationship between dramatic lighting, the cast shadows of the skeletal images and the construction of the shelves themselves.



Police, stationary . . . Gillian Wearing's hilarious video of cops trying not to move, Sixty Minutes PHOTOGRAPH: TATE GALLERY

Surprise choice . . . Angela Bulloch and her beanbag beasts
PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Borland's second major work is altogether better. In a display cabinet in the Münster Academy of Anatomy, Borland discovered a series of sculpted busts that depict a Borneo tribesman, a black South African, a child with a tragic deformity, two sturdy Nordic types, a student's botched exercise in sculpted portraiture, and a low-browed, Neanderthal ape-man. All records relating to these busts were lost in the second world war, but it is likely that they were used as demonstration models in the institute's study of eugenics and "racial hygiene".

BORLAND has had these anonymous heads remade with a computer-assisted laser-imaging machine. The oddly translucent replicas have a transient, luminescent quality. It is a powerful work, evoking bad histories, lost identities, stories untold.

Gillian Wearing's major video installation, Sixty Minutes, is hilarious and deceptively simple. Wearing apparently persuaded 26 policemen and women to pose for a video group portrait. There they sit and stand: helmeted bobbies, fair cops and beefy senior officers. The coppers were persuaded to hold the pose not for a minute or two, but for an hour. There they stand and sit, trying to maintain their composure but with evident, growing discomfort. They twitch. They snuffle and they shuffle. They get cramp, they gurn and stretch. Waves of discomfort overtake them one by one. Slowly, their dignity is eroded, their pomposity magnified, their discipline breached. At the last moment the most disciplined of all snaps in a yelp of relief. His shout can be heard all round the galleries.

Sixty Minutes is incredibly funny. If it has a stronger purpose, it involves our perceptions of authority, and of the bodies beneath the serge.

Angela Bulloch is the surprise choice for the Turner. Giant biomorphic beanbags form a soft sculpture in the centre of the room. Various snatches of dweebly ambient sound are activated by a light sensor as you enter, and by a couple of round platforms you can stand on. The low hum of a theremin adds to the soundscape. A big yellow light comes on, and goes off again, and a machine does a sort of noisy cardiac drawing on a panel fixed to the wall.

What is Bulloch's work about? Chilling out, feeling good about technology, collapsing at the end of a rigorous afternoon of art-watching? The atmosphere is enveloping, in a play-school for adults kind of way, and the whole thing is given a bit of a twist by a slightly unpleasant wall-painting that contains a text from Bulloch's laboured Rules series. The words, from an official aviation document, are all about aeroplane emergency doors and seating arrangements.

This year's competition makes for an interesting, if slightly downbeat show. If it lacks pizazz, that's all to the good — the most interesting art around doesn't always grab the tabloid pages. If anything, the Turner Prize is a corrective to the Royal Academy's Sensation: it isn't sensational at all. Above all, the art is more interesting than the prize itself, which is just as it should be.

The Turner Prize exhibition is at the Tate Gallery, London, until January 18

The clowned heads of Europe

TELEVISION
Nancy Banks-Smith

THERE was a positive entertainment value about pre-war royals. Many were off their heads, and some, like Alexander of Serbia, who was thrown out of a window, on their heads. None seemed to have their feet on the ground.

The Balkans were the best. Elisabeth of Romania would stand on the terrace of her house by the sea, shouting blessings at passing ships. The sheer improbability of the dynasty was celebrated by Dorothy Parker. "Oh, life is a glorious cycle of song/A medley of extemporanea/And love is a thing that can never go wrong/And I am Marie of Romania!"

Albania was the last of the Balkan states to hanker after this unfailing source of fun. The crown was hawked around. Aubrey Herbert, a Conservative MP, turned it down twice on the grounds that the position was unsalaried, thus denying us the charm of an Aubrey of Albania.

An Albanian tribal chieftain declared himself Zog I and entertainingly invented his own salute. Mussolini, who also invented his own salute, invaded and Zog left with his wife, their day-old son and the portable part of the treasury. They spent the war in the Ritz and paid their bill with gold bars.

Zog suggests a visitor from the planet Tharg, an impression his son tends to confirm. In *Mondern Times* (BBC2), we saw the day-old baby grown to 6ft 10in and campaigning to be king in a Monarchy v Republic referendum.

The Modern Times strand was understandably tempted by The Return Of Zog. Nick Broomfield has a lot to answer for. He invented, probably by happy accident, a TV documentary that doesn't need the subject's co-operation. You couldn't snub Broomfield. He affably filmed the snub. This worked excellently with Eugene Terre-blanche, who was exceptionally susceptible to teasing.

Broomfield's success, though variable, encouraged producers like Peter Dale to film the dogsbodies if all else fails.

Zog II displayed the customary coyness, so we passed the time with a Ruritanian cast of brigands. The sequence of non-events was characteristic of the genre. "We're feeling a bit left out . . . We were no clearer what the king's plans were . . . Everywhere he went, he studiously ignored us."

On the eve of the referendum, Zog granted a brief audience. It was not illuminating. "I am going to bring justice, peace and law and order."

"How?"

"That's for me to know."

He was, you noticed, a relentless chain-smoker.

Tirana crackled with gunfire like a perpetual Bonfire Night. Zog lost the referendum, claimed the ballot was rigged and emerged in battledress with a Kalashnikov. The gunfire redoubled. Outside the Electoral Commission, a man was killed.

It was chaotic, and in this sense it gave you a very fair idea of Albania.

The Real Holiday Show (Channel 4) produced Martin and Jason, two friends from Bracknell in Berkshire, who meshed with the beautiful inevitability of the born double-act. Martin is darkly good-looking and obsessed. Jason is cheerful and overweight. Their backchat is clever and funny. They could easily repeat this natural act on TV.

This time they happened to be hunting tarantulas in Borneo. Martin already has 200 tarantulas in his flat. You can't have too many tarantulas.

Jason said: "Martin is seen as the Intrepid Explorer. I am the Mr Bean of this operation." He doesn't like insects at all.

When his hammock wasn't collapsing, Jason dreamed of Disneyland. "It has all the sort of things I like. Air-conditioning, food, lots of food, lots of junk food."

Sometimes silence fell with a bit of a bump. "It's that hot you don't talk to one another because you know that whatever you say is going to wind up that person enough to want to beat you to death."

A tarantula looked out of its hole. There's one! Where? V...e...r...y gently. Got it! Oh, shit!

Personally, I feel for the spider. One moment you're in Borneo, the next you're in Bracknell. You have to sympathise.

Dark underworld in the city of angels

CINEMA
Richard Williams

PERHAPS every devotee of Hollywood film noir who sees **LA Confidential**, Curtis Hanson's adaptation of James Ellroy's vast, splurging novel of death and desire in Lotus Land, will identify a moment which provides the signal that, against great odds, the director's ambition has been matched by his achievement.

My own comes early on, when the action moves out of Los Angeles Police Department headquarters and into the suburbs of what was, in 1953, still a comparatively small city. We're looking down an unkempt road bordered by frame houses. It's a view lifted directly from William Claxton's remarkable 1956 photograph of the doomed saxophonist Art Pepper, just out of the slammer and posing for a comeback publicity shot while sweating out — or so he told us, several decades later — the aftermath of a heroin jag. Pure Ellroy.

There is much, much more of this kind of thing, such as the Beverly Hills garage that opens to reveal an XK120 Jaguar just like the one with which Jean Simmons seduced a lustful Robert Mitchum behind similar double-doors in Preminger's Angel Face in 1952. And, naturally, there is a danger that all of it could be nothing more than a decorative displacement of creative energies which would have been better directed at the narrative. It isn't. It shows how serious Hanson was, how determined to make this movie the one that translated Ellroy to the screen with the full picture intact.

Many people, not least Ellroy, believed the book to be unfilmable. Too big, too dirty, too chaotic. Too much like the LA freeway system, in fact. Miss the off-ramp while you're trying to follow the plot, and you'll wind up an hour later with nothing to look at but cactus. Hanson and his screenwriter, Brian Helgeland, must have cut away a minimum 80 per cent of the book's undergrowth, yet without reducing the essential lushness of character, plot or ambiance.

At heart this is a buddy movie, although the buddies don't know it until the last 20 minutes. Ed Exley and Bud White are two young detectives caught up in the consequences of a Christmas party at the police station, during which a bunch of drink-fuelled cops stomp on the heads of half a dozen Mexicans suspects. A partial cover-up, followed by the slaying of one of the accused cops in a restaurant bloodbath, leads the pair into a three-dimensional web of evil.

To begin with, they travel independently. White (Russell Crowe) is a little bullet of a man, working off the memory of watching his mother die at his father's hands, focusing his mad-dog rage into freelance retribution against wife-beaters. Exley (Guy Pearce), the ambitious son of a distinguished cop, isn't afraid to forfeit the friendship of his colleagues in exchange for the clean-hands rep that will take him where he wants to be.

REFEREEING their rivalry is Dudley Smith (James Cromwell), the captain of detectives, who has their number. "You have the eye for human weakness," Smith tells the smooth Exley, "but not the stomach." To White, he says: "Don't start trying to do the right thing. You haven't had the practice."

Slightly to one side stands another detective, Jack Vincennes (Kevin Spacey). "Hollywood Jack" moonlights as adviser to a TV cop series, while trading details of forthcoming dope raids on the pads of movie stars and jazz musicians for front-page coverage in Hush-Hush, a scandal rag edited by Sid Hudgens (Danny DeVito).

While Exley makes his stand for probity, White dives into the underworld, fists flailing. Their first serious clash comes over the person of Lynn Bracken (Kim Basinger), a Veronica Lake lookalike from a stable of hookers specialising in providing sex with living replicas of Hollywood stars. An hour later, the penny has dropped. "If we're going to figure this thing out," Exley tells White, "we need to work together."



Girl 'n the hood . . . Kim Basinger in LA Confidential

Hanson's record includes The Hand That Rocked The Cradle and The River Wild, but nothing in it suggests the mastery with which he controls the movement of this ensemble piece — in particular Exley's whirlwind interrogation of three murder suspects. The decision to take a chance on casting an Australian (Pearce) and a New Zealander (Crowe) as the young detectives is triumphantly justified by a pair of nerve-tingling performances which deserve to stand in a parade of Oscar nominations alongside Spacey's suave amoralist and Cromwell's tweedy Dud Smith, the scariest Irish cop since Sterling Hayden in The Godfather. Not forgetting Basinger, who floods Lynn Bracken's soul with a bruised virtue rewarded in a final sequence that joyously plays fast and loose with the audience's expectations.

LA Confidential gets just about everything right. The light, the architecture, the slang, the music. A racism ("Schwarz hopheads!") that lives on. A wonderful Lana Turner joke. A sense, above all, of damaged people arriving to make new lives and getting seduced by the scent of night-blooming jasmine, the perfume of corruption.

Crimes of passion

OPERA
Andrew Clements

JANACEK'S final opera was last seen in London more than 10 years ago, and that production, David Pountney's for Welsh National Opera, was a searing, unforgettable experience. ENO's version at the London Coliseum isn't quite in that class dramatically, but it is always tense and involving, and more than good enough to confirm **From the House of the Dead** as one of the 20th century's operatic masterpieces.

It is almost an opera without a plot. Janacek's libretto, taken from Dostoevsky, is a portrait of inmates at a Russian gulag who, locked into an endless cycle of deprivation, can only assert their individuality by recounting the tragic stories of their crimes. Tim Albery skilfully moves the shambling mass of prisoners about Stewart Laing's functionally institutional set, but it is the four autobiographical tales that provide the opera's pivotal moments and allow Janacek's score to seize upon a few precious moments of lyricism.

These cameos are carefully observed and vividly delivered by Robert Brubaker, John Daszak, John Graham-Hall and Andrew Shore, while the soprano Gail Pearson plays a boy whose story is never told in the opera yet who seems the most tragic character of all. The music that lifts these desperate characters, that gives them humanity if not hope, is Janacek's most extraordinary score. Paul Daniel conducts it at white-heat, and encourages both his orchestra and the men of the chorus to believe in it passionately too.

House Of The Dead is ingeniously prefaced by Mark-Anthony Turnage's Twice Through the Heart. Simply and effectively staged by Patti Powell, the dramatic scena becomes a tight monodrama. The female protagonist, a woman imprisoned for killing her violently abusive husband, is sung by Susan Bickley with such directness and command of Turnage's achingly expressive melodies that the work takes on an extra dimension. It is a troubling and thought-provoking evening.

Slinking to the top

Ian Gilmour

Major: A Political Life
by Anthony Seldon
Weidenfeld 856pp £25

JOHN MAJOR'S greatest mistake was not his handling of Black Wednesday in 1992 but his decision to be a candidate for the Conservative leadership in 1990. Major admitted at the time and later that, when he became prime minister, he had insufficient knowledge or experience of politics, government or issues.

Yet his decision to stand against Michael Heseltine and Douglas Hurd, both of whom were manifestly better qualified for the job, was not the result of a sudden whim. As one of his entourage wrote after he had won, Major was "a very nice man" but he was also "ruthless". Highly ambitious and better at getting jobs than doing them, he had meticulously cultivated the parliamentary party.

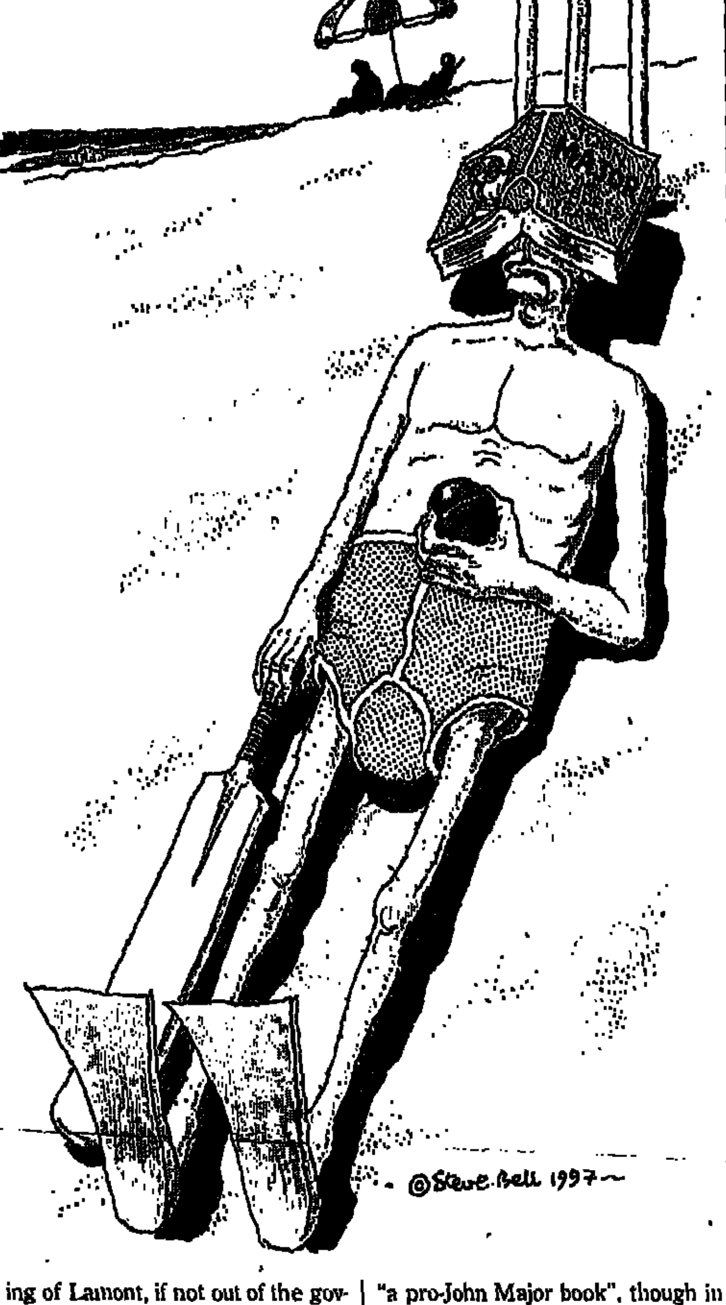
What Anthony Seldon calls Major's "clever and deliberate avoidance of being labelled as on one wing of the party or the other" enabled him "to slink past Heseltine and Hurd" and, with the strong support of Margaret Thatcher, to gain No 10 Downing Street. Had he remained in No 11, he would have grown in stature as a competent Chancellor with a good chance of winning the leadership the next time round, and his standing would have been higher than it is today.

The second blow Major inadvertently dealt his reputation was, heavily against the odds, to win the 1992 general election. Bequeathed a wretched legacy, he had reunited his party, gained the respect of international leaders and was popular at home. Up to the election, nothing had gone badly wrong and, had he lost, he would not have been blamed for the defeat. The general verdict would have been that he was a fully adequate and all-too-short-lived prime minister.

Black Wednesday cost John Major his — and his party's — reputation for competence. From then on he and his government were doomed. Evidently Major soon realised that he and Mrs Thatcher had taken sterling into the Exchange Rate Mechanism at far too high a rate, for Seldon reveals that in 1991 he requested the preparation of a secret plan to devalue sterling within the ERM. Yet when in the autumn of 1992 such a devaluation was clearly imperative, Major and his Chancellor, Norman Lamont, did nothing to achieve one in conjunction with other countries.

Instead, Major made a bombastic speech condemning devaluation, and at a meeting of European finance ministers at Bath, Lamont, with Major's concurrence, tried to bully Helmut Schlesinger, the president of the Bundesbank, into reducing German interest rates. The idea of Lamont being able to browbeat Schlesinger is risible enough, but Schlesinger had no power to make such a decision on his own even if he had wanted to.

Then, after blundering into, and through, Black Wednesday, Major and Lamont made matters worse by not admitting responsibility or apologising for the disaster. The very least that was required was the shifting of Lamont, if not out of the government, into another department. Yet, although Seldon tells us that Major contemplated resignation, both men remained in situ.



All this is admirably recounted in Major: A Political Life. Anthony Seldon is one of the most skilful of the historians of contemporary Britain; his study of the 1951-55 Churchill government is a classic of the genre. But Churchill's Indian summer is a very different book from this one. It is written schematically, whereas this one is "one damn thing after another" and sometimes seems more like a chronicle than a history.

Seldon reminds us that one of the three towns in John Major's Huntingdon constituency is St Neots. The 19th century historian J A Froude ended his biography of the saint of that name with these words: "This is all — and indeed rather more than all — that is known of the life of the great saint, St Neot." When they reach the end of Seldon's 856 pages, many readers may feel that they know rather more than all that needs to be known of the political life of John Major.

Yet this is a valuable book, which will be especially useful for students. Seldon has been an indefatigable interviewer, and the necessary facts are there. He is particularly good on Major's early life, demonstrating what an extraordinary achievement it was for the future prime minister to rise to the top from such disadvantaged beginnings.

Seldon's judgments, too, are usually sound, if sometimes too tentative. As he says, his book is not uncritical; he says also that it is not "a pro-John Major book", though in fact it is, and is none the worse for that. Major has been so much attacked that it was time that a knowledgeable and balanced case was made for him. Seldon rightly thinks Major to be "an honourable man who retained his dignity" to the end and whose "courage was exceptional".

A YEAR or so before the election, Tony Blair said that John Major was not the problem for the Conservative party; the Conservative party was the problem for John Major. Certainly Major was sorely tried by his parliamentary following. The Conservative right were so imbued with ideological fervour that they could not be brought to recognise that, as Matthew Parris put it, "they disgust the British electorate". In addition, he was handicapped by — for a Conservative prime minister — an unprecedentedly hostile press.

Yet some of his difficulties were of his own making. The fractiousness of the parliamentary party was partly due to his hardly ever giving them the scent of future success. He seldom raised his game; he always seemed to be playing for a draw. Though he never satisfied the hardest Thatcherites, he continued down the Thatcherite road, and though he never satisfied the so-called Eurosceptics, he went on drifting in their direction.

Only towards the end did he start making "one-nation" noises which, according to Seldon, expressed his true sentiments. But by then it was much too late, and his government had made far too many blunders.

Merchant's tale

Robert Irwin

The City of Light
by Jacob d'Ancona
translated and edited
by David Selbourne
Little Brown 392pp £22.50

I CAN imagine David Selbourne's delight when, a few years ago, an acquaintance visited his house in Urbino and placed in his hands a medieval manuscript whose very existence had hitherto been unsuspected. This manuscript had no title — The City Of Light is a title imposed on it by Selbourne.

The manuscript purported to be the narrative of a Jewish merchant who in 1270-1 travelled from the Italian port of Ancona to the Chinese port of Zaitun, "the City of Light". Jacob's journey to China anticipated by a few years that of Marco Polo, and his account of how he reached Zaitun and what he saw when he got there seems to provide startling new information on matters of considerable importance. If one had not read The City Of Light, one would not have guessed that Anconitan trade in the 13th century was as vigorous as Jacob describes it, nor would one have suspected the size and commercial importance of the Jewish communities in the ports of Iraq, India and China. Above all, The City Of Light provides unexpected testimony about social and moral decline in the cities of 13th century Sung China.

But that is only part of it, for The City Of Light is no threadbare record of ports visited and exotic commodities exchanged. Jacob is a reflective traveller who, as he travels, meditates lengthily on the wonders of God's creation and on man's duties to God. The book celebrates Jewish religious and commercial achievements. Moreover, once Jacob arrived in China, he apparently took part in an extended series of debates with Chinese merchants and thinkers on civic duty and other matters. Jacob and his occasional intellectual ally, a former Chinese official whom Jacob called "the noble Pitaco", argue in favour of the duties of the individual to society and vice versa. They denounce the decline in religious values, the decay in respect for the old, the cult of youth, moral relativism, permissiveness in education, the unfettered free-market, homosexuals, violence in entertainment, and the shucking off of the blame for criminal acts on to society as a whole.

I love a good hoax and I admire the ingenuity which appears to have gone into this one

Selbourne himself writes on political philosophy from a rightwing point of view (though he has described his position as "civic socialism"). He must have found Jacob's thoughts on religion and civic responsibility thoroughly congenial. The English text has been handsomely produced and illustrated, and it comes equipped with a scholarly glossary and notes. In his introduction, Selbourne informs us that, because of problems concerning the provenance and ownership of the manuscript, the original text cannot be made available for the inspection of scholars.

I can imagine Selbourne's delight in finding such a manuscript — but I do not believe in it. The cod medievalism is beautifully done and quite hard to fault. Even so, there are particular problems. For example, in the course of their overland journey from the Mediterranean to the Gulf, Jacob and his companions travel on from Damascus across the Syrian desert and reach the Euphrates at a point more or less on a parallel with Baghdad, and they do this without encountering any real obstacles. I find this incredible. This was a time when the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and Syria were at war with the Mongol Ilkhans, who ruled over Iran and Iraq, and consequently the land frontier between Syria and Iraq was closed to trade.

Moreover, even in peacetime, the route chosen by Jacob's party is an improbable one. Most caravans chose a more northerly route and crossed over from Aleppo to northern Iraq via Palmyra.

There are larger and more nebulous problems with The City Of Light. It is most improbable that Chinese mandarins or scholars would have condescended to debate with a visiting European trader as an equal. It is hard to understand how Jacob could have participated so effectively in these debates when he was working through an interpreter. It is equally improbable that their debates could have had any effect on the way the city was actually run. Above all, it is obvious that the terms of the debates are flagrantly anachronistic.

If the book is not a historical source, does it work as a novel? I think not, partly because there are too few surprises in its plotting, but mostly because Jacob's character does not develop as his story unfolds. He starts out from Ancona as a wise man and he comes back no wiser. In China he wins every debate he engages in. His opponents become angry and red-faced and, as they realise their inability to deal with Jacob's pious reasonableness, they try to shout him down. I kept hoping that just once Jacob would lose the argument on some big medieval Chinese issue, like the morality of video nasties or the acceptability of lotteries for charitable purposes.

The City Of Light, no novel, is really a treatise on politics and philosophy and, as such, it has faint affinities with such exotic fables as Sir Thomas More's Utopia and Montesquieu's Lettres Persanes. However, the publication of The City Of Light brightened up my week, for I do love a good hoax and I admire the ingenuity and industry which appear to have gone into lovingly developing this one. I presume that someone, knowing of Selbourne's interests, has set him up.

Thrillers

Chris Petit

Death Will Have Your Eyes, by James Sallis (No Exit Press, £10)

A BREATHTAKING dismantling of the usual elements of the spy story, with sleeping agents reactivated for an endgame that takes place across the blacktops and motels of America. It avoids obvious signposts and unfolds more like a laconic, existential road movie in search of the big whatsit. In a world of poetic yearning, lonely detour and sporadic violence, peopled by seemingly random encounters — except there is no such thing in Sallis's book — this moves to a beat of its own. Sallis is a writer of real authority, making absolute what in less capable hands would be effete, his bleak landscape inhabited as much by Neruda and Pavese as by dead letter drops.

The Leper Colony, by Ron McKay (Gollancz, £9.99)

TOUGH but haunted Downe discovers, with his hated father's death, that his real name is Bone, and, after sawing off his dead Da's finger, heads from New York to Glasgow to sort out the past, arriving with bags of hard-boiled attitude. Gentrification and the Scottish Tourist Board notwithstanding, McKay's psycho-city is the same old hell, its violent retribution of biblical intensity, and spelt out in the toughest of vernaculars. With nods to Get Carter — vigilante force, drugs, porn, collusion — and a climax scary enough to make Edgar Allan Poe sit up.

Superstition, by David Ambrose (Macmillan, £16.99)

FOR THE successful blending of surface complexity and narrative simplicity see The X-Files, an impressive weekly dose of bunk made believable by the muttered, prayer-like conviction of its presentation; ditto this tale of the paranormal, which is as canny at deflecting scepticism. Eight people join to create a ghost and then start to die one by one. Whoooeeoo. Brisk countdown plot lets in plenty of quality shuffle on the unknown, plus teasing references to Levin's Rosemary's Baby. Adroit stage management with a Cheshire cat grin.

The Monkey's Fist, by William Pease (No Exit Press, £9.99)

RETIRED DC cop Eddie Nickles gets himself a cold war hangover investigating a double murder that turns out to be a late move between East and West, behind which lurks that old familiar, the US agency so secret it doesn't exist. Ho-hum to start, but Pease turns gumshoe investigation and international intrigue into lively enough bedfellows.

Maritime, by Peter Mews (Allen and Unwin, £6.99)

HIT-AND-MISS neo-existentialism and a moody brood as a man sits at the seaside and tries to remember (car crash, head injuries) what exactly went on between him and his wife in England (dead lover, whoops). Dreamlike and sufficiently underwritten to disqualify as a thriller. Maritime is included here because it is not often this column can drum up Alain Robbe-Grillet for reference. His influence dominates a book too distracted by literary influences.

Monsieur Everything

David Coward

Victor Hugo
by Graham Robb
Picador 682pp £20

Victor Hugo: dazzling poet, playwright, novelist, philosopher, rebel, humanitarian, lover

VICTOR HUGO, not content to be a genius, accustomed his contemporaries and posterity to think of him as a volcano spewing hot truths, a beacon radiating dazzling light. When he died in 1885, France's greatest everything — poet, playwright, novelist, philosopher, rebel, humanitarian, lover — was seen off by 2 million people and the news made page one of newspapers across the globe.

But some dared to carp. Heine thought the adjective "Hugoiste" must be the superlative of "égoiste". Claudel would later speak of the "gaseous emanations of his verse", and when asked to name his favourite lyric poet, André Gide replied: "Victor Hugo, hélas!" That "hélas!" speaks volumes. Clever people have always preferred Baudelaire, Flaubert and Rimbaud, but Hugo has been unstoppable. In 1992, a poll declared him France's second favourite novelist. Nowadays, he is once more a superstar. His was the pen that brought us not only Les Misérables with tunes but Disney's "dorsally challenged teenager called Quasi", as Graham Robb pungently puts it in his brilliant and very sharp biography.

Hugo was an army child, born in 1802, when armies reeked of Napoleonic glory. He was raised largely by his mother who divorced his dashing but philandering father in 1815. By then, Victor wanted to be "Chateaubriand or nothing". He embraced classicism in literature and royalism in politics. He had already attracted attention by the time he married Adèle Foucher in 1822, but he was even then succumbing to his imagination. Riding on the back of Nodier, the "pilot" of Romanticism, he led the crucial charge with Hernani (1830), a fiery drama which broke the rules and prefaced the July Revolution. He no longer wanted to be anyone except Victor Hugo.

Notre Dame de Paris (1831) was a triumph. But it also set a political agenda. Through Quasimodo, foul without but fair within, Hugo reclaimed history for the common man and gave a content to the social romanticism which he never abandoned. He denounced the death penalty and defended freedoms which the state seemed intent on curbing. By the mid-1830s, he had four distinct personas: Olympio (lyricism), Herman (love), Maglia (laughter) and Hierro (combat). It was, as Robb remarks, "a limited company of egos", and Hugo lived each one to the hilt.

Herman and Maglia joined forces as sensuality found outlets in the opportunities offered by actresses, groupies and whores. In 1833, he had begun an affair with Juliette Drouet who admired him as much as she loved him for 50 years. In 1843, he met Léonie Biard and acquired a third household. "Le Père Hugo" juggled his complicated private life more or less successfully for the next 30 years.

By 1840, Romanticism was in the mainstream and Hugo had done as much as anyone to put it there. He was not yet a democrat, which perhaps explains why he failed to capitalise on the vogue for serialised fiction which made media stars of Dumas and Eugène Sue, who between them had a greater impact on popular opinion. Robb does not venture an explanation (was Hugo already too Olympian?), but he notes that Hugo now wrote less and fornicated more. Moreover, he was deeply affected by the death by drowning of his daughter, Léolpoldine, in 1843. He could not accept that God is indifferent to human wishes and for the rest of his life sought to understand the interconnectedness of things which is the basis of cosmic unity.

He threw himself into the revolution of 1848, tried to replace politics by "social questions", failed, resisted Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état* in December 1851, and fled, with a price on his head. He riposted with the devastating Napoléon le Petit which infuriated the new order and gave him his favourite role as a one-man opposition.

Hugo spent the next 18 years in the Channel Islands where he discovered the Ocean, spiritism and a cosmogony which demonstrated that progress was the struggle for Love. It was a religion based on fraternity which, notes Robb tartly, "might have been constructed by a Unesco committee".

Exile proved a smart career move. The oceanic exile now spoke to the whole world in poems rhetorical, lyrical and apocalyptic. Les Misérables (1862), a tale of redemption, accused society of making criminals and gave him a reputation as the great humanitarian.

In 1870, Hugo's return to Paris after the Franco-Prussian débâcle was a triumph. He tried his hand at politics but quickly retreated into his final persona as France's self-appointed spiritual leader.

Graham Robb is a cool, deft and congenial guide to a writer who was and remains a monument. Monuments are difficult to humanise, but Robb, maintaining a cracking pace, gives us a very human Hugo: a fascinating mix of self-delusion and tremendous creative energy. If he hitches up the Hugolian trousers now and then to show feet of clay, he succeeds brilliantly in celebrating the extraordinary achievement of a writer who was everything to excess — hélas.

If you would like to order this book at the special price of £16 contact CultureShop (see page 28)

A question of identity

Lucy Atkins

Wait Till I Tell You
by Candia McWilliam
Bloomsbury 244pp £14.99

IF ASKED to predict the most likely theme for a book of stories by one of today's most talented Scottish writers, "nationality" would surely be top of anyone's list. This collection, at first, seems to offer few surprises: it is divided into two sections, "North" and "South", which are bridged by a sophisticated tale ("Seven Magpies") in which characters journey, symbolically, from Scotland to England. But Wait Till I Tell You is about identity in a wider sense — personal, familial, national — and proves surprisingly expansive.

Some themes are familiar. Many stories in "North" cover the divisions and delimitations of Scotland: one is set on a tiny island community in which "there was nothing to do but talk and little but one another to talk about"; in another, a young man tells his fiancée that he has been in America, building bridges, when he has actually been washing up in a tourist hotel in Loch Lomondside — characters are at once drawn to and restricted by their own particular corner of Scotland.



Candia McWilliam . . . a relish for the spoken word

As the collection progresses, wider questions of identity emerge and it becomes clear that McWilliam is concerned with humanity, not just Scottish or English nationhood. Food is symbolic; a human requirement, common to all, but also a sign of difference, cultural, national or individual.

The narrator of the opening story ("Shredding the Icebergs") runs a stall on a beach, providing food for the "types" or "tribes" which congregate. She asks herself, "where did these different kinds of souls get born and how do they hatch?" This question echoes throughout the collection: what makes people who they are? Class is as important as nationality: in "Homesickness", the owner of a health food shop contrasts the "laird's well-hung haggis with venison and blaeberry" against the "pasties, bridies, mutton pies, puds and saveloys in batter" of his home town. Humanity, for McWilliam, is reassuringly functional, and difference, however notional, has its physical symptoms.

Perhaps the main weakness of the collection is that Englishness does not emerge as vividly as it might. England is described — memorably — by one character as "a country where someone had turned down all the control knobs: no bright colours, no real noise . . ." But a pitfall of describing blandness is the difficulty of simultaneously transcending it.

"South" opens with a funny and clever story, "Strawberries", which focuses on a privileged but isolated only child coping with his dysfunctional, well-to-do English parents, but the main achievement of the piece lies in the ironic subtleties of the child's perspective on adult hang-ups: there can be little to say about English class distinctions that has not been said before.

As the title suggests, the spoken word is relished. Many of the stories begin midway through a conversation, and characters are often described in idiomatic terms. The prose, too, is sonorous — peppered with Scottish words, like "keeked" and "scunnered", and with place names and terminology ("pantiles" on a playhouse roof; the study of "finite dimensional vector space"). This can slow up the pace, but overall McWilliam's minute observation, structural finesse and wry humanity give full voice to the many dimensions of her subject matter.

Time for a traditional roast

Paul Evans

AUTUMN gathers apace. A few bright sunny days have brought the colours out in woodland foliage. These may not be as spectacular as a New England fall — but what is? However, the yellow, gold and bronze leaves have a subtle fire that ring the changes and stir the spirit.

This autumn has been spectacular for spiders, or to be more accurate, the work of spiders. Woods and fields have been densely rigged in the finest gossamer threads that tie twig to twig, leaf to leaf, even earth to sky. Sunlight shines on long free-floating threads, morning dew sparkles on an intricate gossamer rigging that looks like frost. The millions of architects of this remarkable collective construction remain largely invisible, as if the world has been caught in some magic weave. The spider's labour is also a good ecological metaphor. As John Muir said, "everything is hitched to everything else" and, in the soft autumn light, thanks to the spiders, it is.

Another great autumnal joy this year is sweet chestnuts. Driven by some deeply mammalian instinct to bulk up for the winter, people forage through the woods for the spiny green capsules which hold the chestnuts. This year has been unusually good. Not only have the trees produced a heavy crop of nuts but a good proportion of them are plump enough for roasting.

The chestnuts you buy in supermarkets or traditionally roasted on London streets come from special nut-producing varieties in Italy, where chestnuts are also made into flour. Until the development of pollen analysis it was assumed that sweet chestnut trees were native to Britain. Arguments in the 18th century about whether or not this was true gave rise to the science of historical ecology.

The pollen record has since proved that the chestnut was not around in prehistoric Britain and is indigenous to Italy, the Balkans and Spain. The Romans brought chestnuts to England, as they did many other plants. Many of these Roman introductions disappeared during the Dark Ages or were confined to gardens. But chestnuts, later acquiring a medieval name, became naturalised, particularly in oak-birch woodland in acid conditions.

Sweet chestnut, *Castanea sativa*, named after Castanum in Thessaly (Greece) where it may also have been introduced as in Crete, has become an integral part of English woodland. There are many ancient trees scattered throughout England whose huge fluted trunks twist into wide spreading crowns. In the 17th and particularly the 19th centuries, chestnut woods were planted in southeast England and coppiced for the long hop and vine poles. Apart from yew, chestnut is the most rot-resistant timber in the ground.

Sweet chestnut has evolved its own ecological context in England. This is unique in northern Europe and may be one of the reasons why it has escaped the Endothia disease that ravaged chestnut populations in Italy and France. Its American relative, *Castanea dentata*, which once characterised the forests of New England, the Mid-West and the Allegheny mountains, has also been stricken in relatively recent years and been either wiped out or reduced to sprouting suckers from the boles of once stately giants.

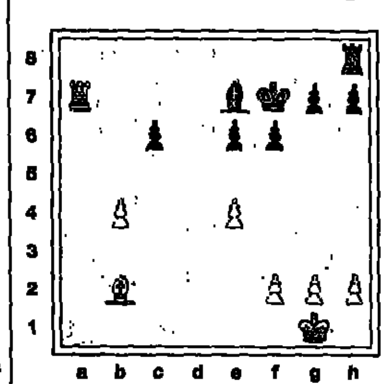
This should make us value our English chestnuts more. I discovered a grove of sweet chestnut trees growing on a narrow ridge with oaks on the Wrekin here in Shropshire just a few days ago. They are old, craggy individuals, stunted by the rocky conditions but absolutely laden with chestnuts. Clambering about in their boughs and foraging in their shade was a real joy, and their fruit have the woody, fiery brown taste of autumn.



ILLUSTRATION: BARRY LARKING

Chess Leonard Barden

GARRY KASPAROV may be all-time No 1, but he can still misjudge the end of a game. Following his débâcle against Deep Blue, when he resigned a drawn position, Kasparov reached the diagram below in the final round at Tilburg.



Joel Lautier (White) blundered by 1 Rc7?, then had the presence of mind to offer a draw. Kasparov accepted, and was distraught when he then spotted c5! when 2 bxc5? Rb8 wins the bishop or mates, while 2 b5 or 2 Bc3 Rb8 leave Black a winning pawn up. This expensive mistake allowed Peter Svidler and Vlad Kramnik — the latter reducing Kasparov's lead in the world rankings — to share first prize.

Ireland's Russian immigrant grandmaster Alex Baburin ran away with last month's Monarch Assurance Open on the Isle of Man, finishing two points clear of the field despite the presence of British co-champion Matthew Sadler and other English GMs. The £10,000 Isle of Man congress is now firmly established as Britain's most important annual event after the British Championship and Hastings.

Kosten-Sadler

1 c4 e6 2 Nc3 d5 3 d4 c6 4 cxd5 exd5 5 Bf4 Bd6 6 Bxd6 Qxd6 7 e3 White's tame opening looks a prelude to peace negotiations . . .

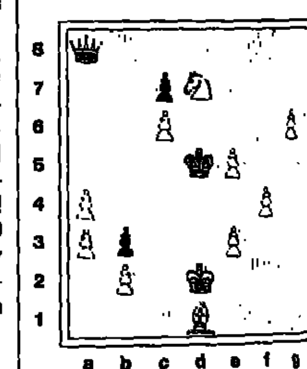
Bf5 8 Ngc2 Nc7 9 Nf4 Nd7 10 Be2 0-0 11 g4?! . . . but not this way. White seems unsure whether he is playing to attack or to equalise, and oblivious to the dangers of keeping his king in mid-board while Black masses his army on the central files.

Be6 12 Bd3 c5 13 dxc5 Nxc5 14 Bc2 Nc6 15 h3 d4! No prizes for meeting a dubious flank attack by a central strike, but this advance also involves a well-judged pawn offer. **16 Nb5 Qe5 17 Nxd4 Rfd8 18 Nfe2 Bc4 19 Qd2 Rxd4 20 Rd1 Ne6 21 f4** White cannot escape the pin on his d4 knight by 21 Nxc6 Rxd2 22 Nxe5 because of Rxc2+, but has prepared a tactic. **Ncxd4 22 Nxd4 Nxd4 23 Qxd4** White's idea is Rxd4 24 fxe5 and the worst is over **Qe7!** Capablanca used to say he needed to see just one move further than his opponent. If 24 Qe5 Qh4 mate.

24 Resigns.

The world team championship began in Lucerne last month. Russia, the US and Ukraine are England's main rivals, with Kazakhstan, Switzerland, Croatia and Cuba likely also-rans. Thanks to long-standing sponsors Duncan Lawrie, England is fielding a near-optimum team of Short, Adams, Sadler, Speelman, Hodgson and Nunn.

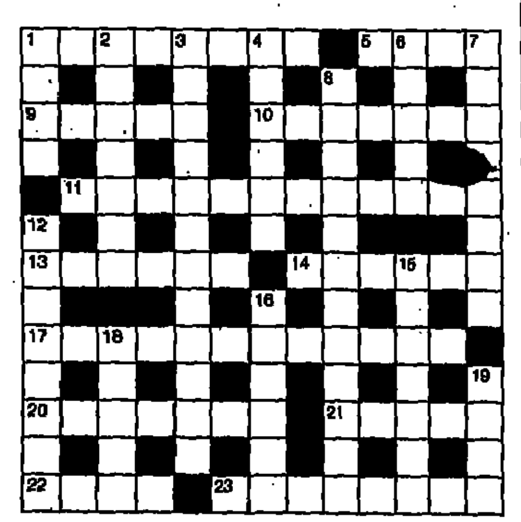
No 2497



White mates in two moves against any defence (by D Prior, Birmingham). White's huge material lead creates too many choices for easy solving.

No 2496: 1 Ng6+ Kg7 2 Rxh7+ Kxh7 3 Nf8+ Kg7 4 Qh7+ Kxf8 5 Qf7 mate.

Quick crossword no. 391



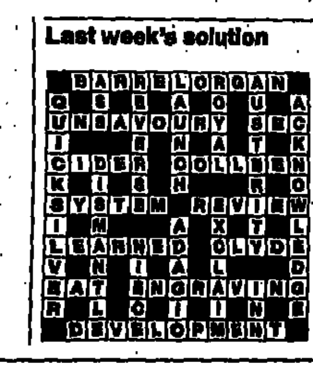
Across

1 Citadel (8)
5 Run away (4)
9 Garret (5)
10 Argue (7)
11 Carefree (5-2-5)
13 Shrewd (6)
14 Rough — odd (6)
17 Carefree (5-3-4)
20 Boat-race meeting (7)
21 Sole (5)
22 Action (4)
23 Enthusiasm (8)

Down

1 Signal — and slow down (4)
2 Withdraw (7)
3 Summarise (12)
4 Waste matter (6)
6 Reasoning (5)
7 All (8)
8 *Old restraint for prisoners (4,3,5)*
12 *Roamed (8)*
15 *Wordy (7)*
16 *Cope (6)*
18 *Dim (5)*
19 *Minus (4)*

Last week's solution



Bridge Zia Mahmood

I ***ALWAYS*** **enjoy re-reading old bridge magazines. Thumbing through a 1970 edition of the American Bridge World, I concluded that the game had been more fun back then. An article by the late Terence Reese described a challenge match of 100 rubbers for £1 a point, which is a high stake even today.**

The match was between the Omar Sharif Bridge Circus and Britain's leading pair, Jeremy Flint and Jonathan Cansino. The Circus contained some fabulous players — Omar himself, Garozzo and Belladonna from Italy, Delmouly and Yallouze from France. But before the brain tumour which so tragically ended his career in top-level bridge, Cansino was regarded as perhaps Britain's greatest player.

The match was evenly balanced — but since the British had to play throughout while the Circus could rotate their players, the strain would eventually tell more heavily on the British pair. The event was played amid great popular excitement, something that is missing from the game these days.

Later that year, the Circus went on a tour of the United States, playing exhibition matches. If any team beat the Circus, its players would receive a top-of-the-range Lancia car from the tour's sponsors. At the end, Sharif remarked that the Circus had become the leading Lancia distributor in America.

Another article contained a question that I thought would interest Guardian readers. What is the greatest number of high-card points that North-South can hold, yet be unable to make a game? The magazine gave this example of a combined 36 count where no game is possible:

North
♠ A J
♥ K Q
♦ A 7 6 5
♣ K J 7 6 5

West
♠ 10 9 8 7 6 5
♥ 10 9 8
♦ Q 10 9 8
♣ None

East
♠ 4 3 2
♥ 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ None
♣ Q 10 9 8

South
♠ K Q
♥ A J
♦ K J 4 3 2
♣ A 4 3 2

But 36 points is by no means the maximum. If you think you can do better, send your solution to me here at the Guardian. I can't promise a top-of-the-range Lancia, but there'll be a small prize for the best solution that I receive by December 1.

As in the example shown, you can, of course, distribute the East-West cards in as unfriendly a fashion as you wish.

A couple of related problems that, as far as I know, have not been solved may tax even the most ingenious among you.

What is the maximum number of points that North-South can hold between them, yet be unable to make game in any denomination against any distribution of the outstanding cards, not merely the least favourable? And, what is the minimum number of points that North-South can hold, yet be able to make game in their chosen denomination against any distribution?

If you can solve either of those, then a place in the Hall of Fame alongside Terence Reese awaits you!

Rugby League First Test: Great Britain 14 Australia 38

Outlook is fraught for Farrell

Andy Wilson

ANDY FARRELL is finding the Great Britain Rugby League captaincy a less than rewarding experience both on and off the pitch.

His only perks from the sport are a Wigan club-car and an endorsement for Faz Pads shoulder protectors in the trade newspaper, The Rugby Leaguer. He does not even have an agent. And the fees for the Great Britain players, even the captain, in the current series against Australia are modest.

But it is not just the money. Last autumn's 3-0 whitewash in New Zealand upset Farrell deeply, and after last Saturday's 38-14 humbling by the Australian Super League team at Wembley he found the blame being laid on his performance in the unaccustomed position of stand-off.

He was undeniably second best to the opposing skipper and stand-off Laurie Daley, whose first-half hat-trick killed off the game disappointingly early for the bulk of a satisfactory 41,000 crowd.

Farrell himself admitted to some early errors, notably kicking out on the full on Great Britain's first possession, missing a tackle on Gorden Tallis and allowing Ryan Girdler to get outside him in the build-up to Australia's first try.

"But finding my feet at stand-off was not the problem," he insisted. "People might say it's not my position because I made a few basic errors. But it wasn't that. It was just dumb play."

What Farrell might have added, were he the type to criticise his team-mates, was that he was playing behind an outgunned pack. As Daley said: "All big games are won in the forwards and they laid the platform for my tries."

Great Britain allowed the props Jason Stevens and Brad Thorn, the Australians' Man of the Match, to dominate the ruck area. Paul Broadbent and Brian McDermott enjoyed some early success going forward but failed to sting in defence.

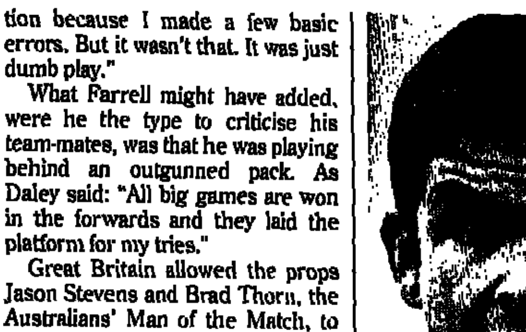
"We were too soft; we needed more steel," said the Great Britain coach Andy Goodway. "We weren't making the hard shots. We need to test the referee a little bit."

With both his first-choice props Barrie McDermott and Harvey Howard unavailable, Goodway may have to turn to the Wigan veteran Neil Cowie for the second Test at Old Trafford for the required injection of "mongrel". The Leeds youngster Adrian Morley, who injected some much-needed vigour from the Wembley bench, also seems certain to be promoted to the starting 13.

It was a difficult Test for Goodway, who was criticised for selecting Farrell out of position and was even spat at by a few Great Britain spectators as he walked back to the dressing rooms after Australia had run in two late tries to build a slightly flattering winning margin.

But it was hardly his fault that his players made such a nervous opening and handed Australia their first two tries on a plate. "People look at the international stage to help us get over the World Club Championship, and they get emotional," he said. "But the international team is only the icing. The clubs are the cake, and we have got to get the cake right before the icing."

That is why, for all the talk of Farrell switching back to loose-forward for the remaining two Tests, Goodway will surely stick with his captain and Bobbie Goulding in the critical half-back positions at Old Trafford on Saturday.



Farrell . . . tough time ahead

Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

Belgians dent Ireland's World Cup ambitions

THE Republic of Ireland's hopes of qualifying for France 98 were dealt a big blow by Belgium in the first leg of their World Cup play-off when the two sides fought out a 1-1 draw in Dublin. Denis Irwin put the home side ahead with a spectacular seventh-minute goal, but the visitors equalised in the 30th minute. With away goals counting double, the Irish must defeat Belgium or hold them to a high scoring draw in the return leg if they are to progress.

The game between Russia and Italy, played in freezing conditions and a semi-blizzard at the Dynamo Moscow stadium, also finished as a 1-1 draw. Italy will go into the return leg in Naples on November 15 as clear favourites.

Christian Vieri put the *Azzurri* ahead early in the second half but Russia were level two minutes later when Fabio Cannavaro turned a cross into his own net.

In Zagreb, a goal in each half gave Croatia a 2-0 advantage over Ukraine, while Yugoslavia made their home leg a mere formality by crushing Hungary 7-1 in Budapest.

DAVID PLEAT became the first Premiership manager to be axed this season when he was sacked by Sheffield Wednesday after the club's recent poor form. Wednesday are now languishing at the foot of the table with only two wins in 13 league games. The last straw for chairman Dave Richards was the club's 6-1 humiliation by Manchester United last Saturday. Pleat admitted to being "very disappointed" as his 29-month stay at Hillsborough came to an end: "Only 13 games have been played so far and I thought there was still plenty of time to turn it round. But it's the end of a chapter and I wish the club well." Wednesday's coach Peter Shreeves is to take over as caretaker manager.

United were also partly responsible for the departure of Arie Haan as coach of Feyenoord. The Dutch club has had a string of disappointing results which have left it 13 points adrift of the league leaders Ajax. The setbacks included a 2-1 defeat by United in the Champions League at Old Trafford. Haan's assistant Geert Meijer has taken over team affairs on a temporary basis.

LAWRENCE DALLAGLIO is to lead England into the pre-Christmas series of Rugby Union internationals against New Zealand, Australia and South Africa. But the 25-year-old Wasps flanker will be on probation. He has been appointed for a specific period only and is not certain to lead England into the 1999 World Cup. "Lawrence is captain for the foreseeable future, but we don't know how that future is defined," said the England manager, Roger Uttley.

MICHAEL SCHUMACHER admitted he made a mistake but refused to apologise for the collision with Jacques Villeneuve at the European Grand Prix in Jerez which cost the German the world title. He said: "I made a mistake. But I didn't try to foul. I see no reason to apologise."

Meanwhile, in Britain, the German driver's nomination in the Best International Sportsman category of ITV's Champions of Sports awards was withdrawn, and Jackie Stewart, a driving force for improved safety standards in international motor racing, gave a warning that grand prix racing risks an accident of horrific proportions unless the governing body takes a hard line against the tactics employed by Schumacher in Spain.

FORMER world heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson suffered a punctured lung and a broken rib in a motorcycle accident near his home at Hartford, Connecticut. The crash happened when the the 31-year-old boxer's bike hit a patch of sand and overturned.

A hospital spokesman said the injuries would have no impact on his boxing career once he recovered in about four weeks. Tyson lost his bid to regain the world heavyweight championship in June when he was disqualified in his rematch with Evander Holyfield in Las Vegas.

THE world's first supersonic car, Thrust SSC, returned to Britain after its record-breaking run in the United States. The twin jet-engined car clocked up a mighty 763mph with RAF fighter pilot Andy Green at the wheel in Nevada's Black Rock desert. The 10-tonne car and its 80 tonnes of support equipment were flown home in a massive Antonov 124 cargo plane. The car's arrival at Stansted was greeted by team leader Richard Noble.

Football results and tables

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Aston Villa 0, Chelsea 2; Barnsley 1, Blackburn Rovers 1; Bolton 1, Liverpool 1; Derby County 3, Arsenal 0; Everton 0, Southampton 2; Manchester Utd 6, Sheff Wed 1; Newcastle Utd 3, Leicester 3; Tottenham 0, Leeds 1; Wimbledon 1, Coventry 2.

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE:
Division One: Bradford 0, WBA 0; Charlton 3, Ipswich 0; Huddersfld 3, Stoke 1; Norwich 2, Bury 2; Nottm For 3, Crewe 1; Oxford 0, Man City 0; Port Vale 0, Reading 0; QPR 1, Birminghm 1; Sheff Utd 2, Tranmere 1; Stockport 1, Sunderlnd 1; Wolves 1, Middlesbro 0.

Division Two: Bournemth 0, Brentford 0; Bristol City 1, Oldham 0; Burnley 2, Walsall 1; Carlisle 2, Wrexham 2; Fulham 1, Chesterfld 1; Gillingham 1, Millwall 3; Grimsby 5, Southend Utd 1; Northmptn 1, Bristol R 1; Preston 0, Plymouth 1; Watford 4, Blackpool 1; Wigan 1, York 1; Wycombe 2, Luton 2.

Division Three: Barnet 1, Notts Co 2; Cambridge 1, Torquay Utd 1; Cardiff 0, Swansea 1; Chester 4, Rochdale 0; Darlington 4, Hull 3; Exeter 0, Peterboro 0; Hartlepool 0, Brighton 0; Lincoln 1, Leyton O 0; Rotherham 1, Macclesfld 0; Scarboro 4, Doncaster 0; Shrewsbry 3, Mansfield 2

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE:
Premier Division: Aberdeen 1, Hearts 4; Dunfermline 0, Celtic 2; Hibernian 1, Dundee Utd 3; Rangers 4, Kilmarnk 1; St Johnstn 4, Motherwell 3.

First Division: Airdrie 1, Raith 0; Dundee 0, Partick 0; Hamilton 1, Morton 0; Stirling A 0, St Mirren 0

Second Division: Forfar Ath 2, Clyde 2; Stenhsmuir 0, East Fife 0; Stranraer 1, Livingston 1; Inverness CT 0, Brechin 0

Third Division: Berwick 1, Albion 1; Cowdnbth 0, Alloa 3; E Stirling 1, Arbroath 2; Montrose 2, Dumbarton 2; Queens Pk 0, Ross Co 3

CHALLENGE CUP:
Final: Falkirk 1, Queen of Sth 0

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	13	8	4	1	29	7	28
Arsenal	13	6	6	1	27	13	24
Blackburn	13	6	6	1	23	11	24
Chelsea	12	7	1	4	27	15	22
Leicester	13	6	4	3	19	13	22
Derby	12	6	2	4	22	15	20
Leeds	13	6	2	5	16	13	20
Liverpool	12	5	4	3	21	13	19
Newcastle	10	5	2	3	12	13	17
Wimbledon	13	4	4	5	15	15	16
West Ham	12	5	1	6	16	19	16
Coventry	13	3	7	3	10	14	16
Crystal Palace	12	4	3	5	12	14	15
Aston Villa	13	4	2	7	12	19	14
Tottenham	13	3	4	6	11	17	13
Southampton	13	4	1	8	13	20	13
Everton	12	3	3	6	13	16	12
Bolton	12	2	6	4	10	16	12
Barnsley	13	3	1	9	10	36	10
Sheff Wed	13	2	3	8	16	35	9

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE

Division One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nottm Forest	14	9	3	2	24	11	30
Swindon	15	8	4	3	19	17	28
Charlton	14	7	4	3	30	18	25
Sheff Utd	12	7	4	1	20	10	25
West Brom	14	7	4	3	17	12	25
Middlesbrough	13	7	3	3	23	13	24
Bradford	14	6	6	2	16	14	24
QPR	14	6	4	4	19	20	22
Wolverhampton	15	6	4	5	18	16	22
Sunderland	14	6	3	5	20	18	21
Birmingham	15	5	6	4	17	12	21
Stoke	14	6	3	5	16	17	21
Stockport	15	5	5	6	23	22	20
Port Vale	15	5	4	6	19	18	19
Bury	15	3	7	5	17	23	16
Norwich	14	4	4	6	11	21	16
Crewe	15	4	3	8	18	23	15
Oxford Utd	15	4	3	8	18	23	15
Reading	15	3	6	6	16	24	15
Man City	14	3	5	6	17	16	14
Ipswich	13	3	5	5	13	18	14
Tranmere	14	3	3	8	20	22	12
Portsmouth	14	2	4	8	16	23	10
Huddersfield	15	1	5	9	11	29	8

Division Two

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Watford	16	11	2	2	27	11	35
Bristol City	15	8	3	4	21	12	27
Northampton	15	7	6	2	17	10	27
Millwall	14	8	2	4	21	14	26
Gillingham	15	7	3	5	21	18	24
York	15	6	4	5	21	20	22
Bournemouth	15	5	7	3	16	12	22
Oldham	15	5	6	4	23	21	21
Bristol Rovers	15	5	6	4	19	18	21
Chesterfield	15	5	6	4	16	15	21
Wycombe	15	5	5	5	24	23	20
Blackpool	15	6	2	7	23	27	20
Grimsby	15	5	5	5	17	16	20
Wigan	15	5	4	6	22	23	19
Wrexham	14	5	4	5	21	19	19
Preston	15	5	4	6	14	12	19
Fulham	15	5	4	6	14	15	19
Luton	15	4	5	6	14	21	17
Brentford	15	4	4	7	17	22	16
Walsall	15	4	3	8	18	23	15
Southend	15	4	3	8	15	29	15
Burnley	15	2	8	5	14	17	14
Plymouth	15	2	7	6	15	22	13
Carlisle	15	3	3	9	19	29	12

Division Three

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Notts County	15	9	5	1	23	13	32
Peterborough	15	9	4	2	33	14	31
Exeter	15	8	5	2	22	14	29
Lincoln City	15	8	4	3	17	13	28
Scarborough	15	7	3	5	23	19	24
Barnet	15	7	3	5	22	20	24
Scunthorpe	14	7	3	4	17	15	24
Chester	15	7	2	6	25	22	23
Colchester	15	6	5	4	21	22	23
Macclesfield	15	5	7	3	19	14	22
Rotherham	15	5	6	4	22	20	21
Hartlepool	15	4	9	2	21	18	21
Torquay	15	5	5	5	20	20	20
Cambridge Utd	15	4	6	5	20	19	18
Shrewsbury	15	5	3	7	[illegible]	[illegible]	18
Mansfield	15	5	3	7	[illegible]	[illegible]	18
Cardiff	14	3	8	3	[illegible]	15	17
Leyton Orient	15	4	5	6	[illegible]	[illegible]	17
Rochdale	15	5	1	9	[illegible]	[illegible]	16
Swansea	15	5	1	9	[illegible]	[illegible]	16
Darlington	15	3	6	6	[illegible]	21	15
Hull	15	3	[illegible]	9	[illegible]	[illegible]	12
Brighton	15	2	5	8	11	[illegible]	11
Doncaster	15	0	[illegible]	11	[illegible]	[illegible]	4

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE

Premier Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hearts	11	8	0	3	26	13	24
Celtic	10	8	0	2	21	8	24
Rangers	10	7	2	1	34	[illegible]	23
St Johnstone	11	4	3	4	12	15	15
Dundee Utd	11	3	4	4	[illegible]	[illegible]	13
Hibernian	11	3	3	5	13	16	12
Dunfermline	11	3	3	5	15	26	12
Kilmarnock	11	3	2	6	8	23	11
Aberdeen	11	2	3	6	12	21	9
Motherwell	11	2	2	7	16	24	8

First Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hamilton	11	7	3	1	20	9	24
Dundee	11	7	3	1	17	7	24
Raith	11	5	3	3	15	10	18
Falkirk	10	5	2	3	17	19	17
Airdrie	11	3	6	2	10	9	15
Ayr	10	3	3	4	12	12	12
St Mirren	11	3	3	5	11	15	12
Partick	11	1	5	5	13	20	8
Gr Morton	11	2	2	7	10	17	8
Stirling	11	1	4	6	12	19	7

Second Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Livingston	11	6	4	1	18	11	22
Clydebank	10	4	5	1	12	6	17
East Fife	11	5	2	4	16	16	17
Stranraer	11	4	4	3	18	13	16
Forfar	11	5	1	5	20	21	16
Stenhousemuir	11	4	2	5	15	19	14
Queen of South	10	4	1	5	18	18	13
Clyde	11	3	4	4	14	16	13
Brechin	11	2	4	5	12	20	10
Inverness CT	11	1	5	5	15	16	8

Third Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ross County	12	8	2	2	31	17	26
Arbroath	11	7	1	3	24	13	22
Alloa	11	7	0	4	24	13	21
Albion	11	6	2	3	22	20	20
Queen's Park	12	5	4	3	16	13	19
East Stirling	11	6	0	5	18	18	18
Berwick	11	4	2	5	18	19	14
Montrose	11	2	3	6	16	26	9
Dumbarton	11	1	4	6	15	23	7
Cowdenbeath	11	1	0	10	3	25	3

Tennis Paris Open

Sampras takes the fifth

PETE SAMPRAS virtually made sure of ending 1997 as the world No 1 with his 6-4, 4-6, 6-3, 6-1 victory over the surprise finalist Jonas Bjorkman in the Paris Open last Sunday, ***writes Richard Jago in Paris.***

It means the American should emulate the only other player to have finished top at the end of five successive years, his compatriot Jimmy Connors.

In a year in which Sampras has been pursued by Michael Chang and Patrick Rafter, the outcome of his travails appeared to be a relief to him. So, too, did the diagnosis on his shoulder injury; it is "tired" not torn.

Earlier tension revealed a side of Sampras never glimpsed before. He uttered a four-letter word and threw away his racket after a double fault.